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dore T. Munger, William De W. Hyde, Henry Van
Dyke, and Henry C. Potter. With portrait of Wil-
liam Belden Noble. 12mo, gilt top, \$1.25. 1898.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

**THE WITNESS TO THE
INFLUENCE OF CHRIST**

THE WITNESS TO THE
INFLUENCE OF CHRIST

BEING THE

William Belden Noble Lectures

FOR 1904

BY

THE RIGHT REVEREND

WILLIAM BOYD CARPENTER, D. D.

BISHOP OF RIPON



BOSTON AND NEW YORK

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

The Riverside Press, Cambridge

1905

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Published May, 1905

THE WILLIAM BELDEN NOBLE LECTURES

THIS Lectureship was constituted a perpetual foundation in Harvard University in 1898, as a memorial to the late WILLIAM BELDEN NOBLE of Washington, D. C. (Harvard, 1885). The deed of gift provides that the lectures shall be not less than six in number, that they shall be delivered annually, and, if convenient, in the Phillips Brooks House, during the season of Advent. Each lecturer shall have ample notice of his appointment, and the publication of each course of lectures is required. The purpose of the Lectureship will be further seen in the following citation from the deed of gift by which it was established :—

“The object of the founder of the Lectures is to continue the mission of William Belden Noble, whose supreme desire it was to extend the influence of Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life ; to make known the meaning of the words of Jesus, ‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’ In accordance with the large interpretation of the Influence of Jesus by the late Phillips Brooks, with whose religious teaching he in whose memory the Lectures are established and also the founder of the Lectures were in deep sympathy, it is intended that the scope of the Lectures shall be as wide as the highest interests of humanity. With this end in view, — the perfection of the spiritual man and the consecration by the spirit of Jesus of every department of human character, thought, and activity, — the Lectures may include philosophy, literature, art, poetry, the natural sciences, political economy, sociology, ethics, history both civil and ecclesiastical, as well as theology, and the more direct interests of the religious life. Beyond a sympathy with the purpose of the Lectures, as thus defined, no restriction is placed upon the lecturer.”

PREFACE

IN these lectures I have imposed upon myself certain limitations. I have excluded from my view all questions which deal with the evidential value of miracles and prophecy, and other similar matters. I have dealt only with the historical fact of the influence of Christ, and the spiritual fact of his influence in religious experience. The world accepts Christ as its ideal: this is the outward fact; the soul recognizes Christ as its emancipator: this is the inward fact. The witness without is too clear a fact to be explained away, and it gives a guarantee to the experience of the soul. Again, the witness without sets before us the law of soul progress, and this law is verified in a Christian experience too wide, too continuous, and too well established to be ignored. There is thus a dual witness to Christ, — one which is universally admitted, the other which is indisputable to those who have met with

it. If we cannot claim these as final proofs, we can claim that they render rational the inquiry whether Jesus Christ is not the Way, the Truth, and the Life to the souls of men, — the true law of man's spiritual progress.

W. B. RIPPON.

March 26, 1905.

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THE WITNESS TO THE INFLUENCE OF CHRIST

I

TWO ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S INFLUENCE

WHEN your President did me the honour to invite me to deliver the Noble Lectures, I felt that my subject was chosen for me. It is true that the terms of the foundation give a wide discretion to the lecturer; but for myself, I felt, whether I had regard to the name associated with the foundation, or to the name of him the spirit of whose teaching these lectures are designed to perpetuate, that there was but one subject for me.

It was impossible for me to recall the gifted and promising, but all too short, years of Mr. William Noble's life, or the inspiration of the teaching of Phillips Brooks, without being led to the thought of Jesus Christ himself; for only those who knew these two men in the most sacred intimacy could understand what

Jesus Christ meant to them. It was the thought of Jesus Christ which lifted young William Noble into the clear region of joyous and confident trust when, amid the realization of life's fullest happiness, the shadow of death began to fall.

It was in the unfolding of what Christ was to men that Phillips Brooks found a task of never failing delight. To think of Christ, to speak of Him, to show to men the still unexplored riches of his wisdom and of his helping power, was an unalloyed joy to Phillips Brooks.

He was a great man, and an eminently sane one. In piety there is often an overstrained element, as though the piety were effort. There was no such feeling left in the minds of those who knew Phillips Brooks. With him religious thought and religious utterance seemed natural and easy; he was as one who had entered into the heritage of faith as if it belonged to him by right of birth; his was no parvenu piety; his days seemed bound each to each by natural piety.

He was protected from all religious pretentiousness by the absolute sincerity and simplicity of his spiritual confidence. He

knew that he was in God's world to do God's work and to give God's message, and nothing could arise to make him wish it otherwise; he accepted life and duty as a child accepts his father and mother, without questioning or complaining. So single-minded was he that he was original. What sprang from him was what came to him. Some said that he was uncritical, — that he would ignore the true exegesis of a text, and build up his sermon on a mistake of its meaning. It may have been so, but he was, I imagine, heedless of this, because he delighted in the message he had to give; and if at times he ran his message through a channel which was set apart for some other tributary, yet we can forgive it, for we remember how true, how faithful to the spirit of his Master his message was, and like all great teachers, he was a minister of the spirit not of the letter.

And when I think of the message he gave to you in America, and not less to us in England, — for on the eastern side of the Atlantic as well as on the west he was loved and welcomed, — I know that my theme in these lectures is fixed for me, and that theme is Jesus Christ himself.

The life of man is twofold. In its ordinary aspect it is represented by his relationship with things without. This is the life of man as it is known by his fellow men ; it is the life of business occupation, of social intercourse, of duties discharged and of enterprises accomplished. But there is the other aspect of life ; there is the life known only to the soul ; there is the realm in which the heart knows its own bitterness, in which soul-conflicts, misgivings, fears, hopes, self-reproaches are known ; there is the life within. The growth of man in moral power is the expression of the interaction of outward and inward influences. The life without and the life within have their message ; they are, moreover, formative powers, both witness to the significance of life, and both are operative in its development.

We meet illustration of this in the life of our Lord. The story begins with the outward circumstances of his life. In his early life He lives in the quiet home, under the ordinary influences which surrounded a Jewish child. He works at a trade, and for thirty years He submits to the yoke of normal circumstances. But these outward facts do not cover the full range of his life. We soon catch indications

of the inward life. There is for Him a life of the spirit. The relationship with the world of spirit discloses itself ; heaven is opened above his head ; the voice from above is heard ; the light from God shines upon Him ; the joy of the heavenly relationship is his ; whether the world hears it or not, He knows that He is the beloved Son of God. This is not all : the life of spiritual things demands, sooner or later, isolation ; the spirit driveth Him into the wilderness ; the battle must be fought alone ; the life of self-communing becomes the life in which spiritual principles are seen struggling for the mastery. Whatever view we take of the story of the temptation (Matt. iv. and Luke iv.), it is a revelation of principles which are fighting for supremacy in human life ; and in this conflict Christ must take his part. He is not one to whom the inward thoughts and powers have no meaning ; to Him the spiritual is the true life. He accepts the outward circumstances of life as coming to Him from his Father ; but the true life of man is the life of the spirit. He lives, therefore, in meek submission to the external conditions of life, and equally the inward life has a real and profound significance for Him. Such is the story of

his preparation for his work and mission. The outward life and the inward life bring their experiences of toil and of conflict, and only when He has lived through the needed influences of both does He come forth to his life of ministry. Then we read that "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit."

If the life of Christ is in any true sense the exemplar life, disclosing to us the true significance of human life, do not these recorded facts indicate that no view of life is complete without the witness and discipline of facts without and of facts within? It is only under the twofold guidance of facts without and of the experiences within that we shall be able to read the book of life. I recall a scene from the Apocalypse, in which the seer saw an angel figure standing and holding a little book open in his hand. He is the angel who can open the book of life which all men desire to read, and he can open it because he stands with one foot upon the solid earth and the other upon the great deep. He stands not upon one element alone. The hard facts of existence are recognized, and not less the great depths of experience; his power to interpret depends upon his making both his standpoint.

It is a vision which expresses in symbol the principle that in order to understand life and open its book and read therein, we must accept the outward facts and not neglect the inward experience. This is that duality of witness which becomes a source of clear vision and of practical power.

Life's teaching, if I mistake not, comes to us in this double fashion. Take the simplest aspect of it. We are environed with mystery; stand where we will, we must put our foot upon the great deep; man's way is in the sea of things unfathomable and inexplicable. The mysteries of life and law, of mind and spirit, to say nothing of force and matter, and what we call Nature, hardly knowing what we mean, — the mysteries of these things and many more are great enough to make any man pause before he indulges in confidence of opinion. There are moments in which we realize that silence is best; for behold, we know not anything. At such moments we are ready to admit that our clearest views and our surest convictions may only be, can only be, provisional, hypothetical: at the best, good working hypotheses. There are regions of mystery in which we are bound to

be agnostic, and there are moments of life in which we are compelled to acknowledge it. Mystery is near us: we cannot plumb its depths; the sea is his; He made it.

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But nevertheless there is solid ground as well as sea: we feel that life is real, and that its experiences cannot be valueless. Besides the sense of the mystery of things, there is a healthy confidence which claims that, whatever clouds surround us, there is some solid ground beneath our feet. We possess certain powers; we feel sure that these powers are, for the purposes of life, valid powers. We are convinced that, so far as responsibility goes, we must at least act as though those powers were valid. If it should prove in the hereafter that these powers were valueless, that we were beings who were fated to guide our habits by instruments which were always going wrong, we should, I think, still feel that our responsibility in this life required us to act as if the powers given to us were valid for the measurement of life. If the Supreme Power has put into our hands instruments which register falsely, we must believe that He will not hold us responsible for the errors in the instrument, but He will certainly hold

us responsible for its use, and deem us blameworthy if we, from a doubt about the instrument, refuse altogether to use it.

Whatever we may feel at times when overwhelmed with the magnitude and mystery of things, we do not hesitate in our ordinary moments to act and think with confidence in the powers which are at our disposal. But here I may remark on what I may describe as the religious spirit which these rival experiences evoke. On the one side, we feel that our powers of thought and conscience and affection are valid enough to make us realize that we are responsible for their use; on the other, we feel ourselves plunged into the great ocean of unfathomable mystery and overwhelming force, and we profoundly distrust ourselves and our puny infinitesimal powers. Both experiences are true, both yield valid results, both make for religion: the one appeals to moral energy; the other compels us, in doubt of self, to fling all ultimate responsibility on the one Eternal Force, without whom we can do nothing and are nothing, and without whom all our powers, mental or moral, lack final validity and abiding value. You will notice here the duality of our experience:

one which leads to confidence and courage to accept responsibility; the other which leads to self-distrust in the realization of the mystery of all-embracing Force. We are thus met by two witnesses; it is on these two and not on one alone that our faith finally rests. All approach to intellectual or moral or spiritual confidence will be found to rest upon a kind of double witness. And I have sometimes thought that dualism in religion is the declaration of two premises without the final conclusion. The realization of the unity of Nature suggests the conclusion, which can be none other than that of the Apostle, that "all things work together for good."

When we turn to the physical sciences, we meet the same conditions. We feel at first that here at least we are on solid ground. We are dealing with materials which we can see and touch and handle. We need not doubt our senses, nor hesitate about the validity of our observations. We stand upon the firm ground of facts. But here too we meet the great sea of mystery.

Whenever a man pushes his investigations far enough, he comes into contact ultimately with an element of mystery. We seek to trace

out the source and working condition of any force. We observe its methods, we can note the conditions under which it manifests itself, or can attain its maximum expression of power; but when we begin to examine its pedigree, or to trace it as we might a river to its source among everlasting hills, we find that we enter realms which forbid our advance. The ultimate source of the power lies in the realms of mystery. We can examine it as it shows itself, we may even measure the changes through which it passes in certain stages of its history; but sooner or later we come to the realm into which the most adventurous intellect has not been able to penetrate. The ultimate sources lie beyond our reach. We are face to face with mystery. We hear again the age-long sentence, "No man hath lifted my veil." I need not remind you how numerous are the illustrations of this experience.

Thus an eminent man of science writes: "All the researches which I have been carrying out serve merely to throw light upon the physiology of the nervous system. They teach me nothing about the working of the mind. Truly I have found out a great deal about the apparatus which the mind employs, but I know

as little about the mind itself as when I started.”¹ Similarly, another man of science writes: “So far as pure science is concerned, no law can be anything more than an expression of the fact of the orderly uniformity of the phenomena of the universe; it expresses the relationship of the forces, but gives no clue as to their cause.”² Here we seem to be tracking streams towards their source, but we come at last to the realm across which there is no thoroughfare; our inquiries lead us into the presence of mystery.

Now if this be the case with the forces at work in the material world, we may well moderate our expectations when we investigate the facts and conditions of forces working in the less accessible realms. And we must not be surprised if, in investigating the working of moral and religious forces, we find ourselves confronted with a like element of mystery.

The existence of this quality of mysteriousness is frankly recognized by thoughtful writers. To take a single example, Professor M.

¹ Dr. Hill, *Introduction to Science*, pp. 13, 14. London, 1900. Temple Primer Series.

² Dr. L. Carpenter, *Energy in Nature*, p. 205. London and New York, 1883.

Jastrow tells us that "in all religious movements of a large character, there are influences at work which cannot wholly be accounted for by historical investigation. This," he adds, "is but equivalent to an admission that within this section of the historical study of religions there is a limit which cannot be transcended."¹ And later on, he rightly, as it seems to me, argues that the existence of the realm of mystery practically makes it impossible for philosophy to solve the mysteries of the universe or of human life. "The sense of the mysterious is a factor in human life to which even philosophy must consent to pay a proper degree of respect."² Religion, therefore, may be justified in entering a protest against the attempt of philosophy or of science to invade her realm and map out the whole territory of life as though fully known and accounted for. Religion cannot claim the right to bar the path of philosophy or science, or deny to them the right of entry into any field of inquiry, but she may and must decline to accept conclusions as final which are based

¹ *The Study of Religion*, p. 179. London, 1901. Contemporary Science Series.

² *Ibid.*, p. 240.

upon inquiries which have left vast areas of life unexplained and even unexplored.

Thus we must be prepared in every field of knowledge to be confronted sooner or later by the realm of mystery. It is in the healthy determination to keep one foot on solid earth, and to recognize that beneath the other there must be the great deep, wherein are things mysterious, that we shall be best ready for life. We shall neither be conceitedly sure that we can compass all knowledge and explain everything, nor so overwhelmed by the awful sense of mystery that we shall imagine that nothing may be known, but we shall hold our powers in proper balance, admitting the great mystery which surrounds us, and yet readily hearkening to the voice of knowledge. We shall walk through the dark neither disdaining nor over-estimating the lamp which sheds partial light upon our path. We shall "let knowledge grow from more to more; but more of reverence" will be ours, and this reverence, springing alike from the recognition of our ignorance and the sense of responsibility, becomes a powerful factor in the development of the religious consciousness. The importance of this factor will become clearer as we

proceed. It is enough that we notice here that our life is spent in the presence of things which defy explanation and of duties which demand our obedience; that we live in a realm of dimly discerned forces and clearly seen responsibility; that we can hear the voices without us and the voices within, and that to the truly wise man none of these voices are without significance. In other words, if we would open the book of life and read what is written therein, we must refuse neither the solid ground of fact nor the voices of the great deep.

The recognition, therefore, of the double forces which enter into our life is indispensable. This is or ought to be obvious, but unfortunately from opposite extremes we meet with a disposition to ignore the witness of one voice or the other.

On the one side we have those who in the name of science have wished to exclude the evidence of all facts except those of physical nature. The survey of those facts which can be tested by sight and touch is deemed sufficient; all life and all phenomena must be brought beneath the narrow standard derived from things seen. The moral and spiritual

realms are ruled out of court. This materialistic temper is not new in the world. Plato complained of it in his day, and a generation ago it was not uncommon among ourselves. But happily a better and a more reasonable spirit now prevails, and the narrow materialistic temper is found mainly among those who take their science from belated authorities.

If on the one side the narrow spirit which desired to measure life in one-sided fashion was exhibited in the name of science, on the other side it appeared in the name of religion. Extremes meet, and it is well to note that the exclusive temper is not the monopoly of one party alone. There have been those who as advocates of faith have sought to exclude from consideration whole realms of knowledge. This eagerness to bring the whole universe under some neat set of theories has been only too frequent. The love of system is common: men dislike the proximity of the unexplored or the unexplained; hence comes the popularity of clever and shallow attempts to reduce all facts and all knowledge into a narrow and easily understood compass. Let a man declare that he can explain all facts

and phenomena by a few simple laws, let him declare that he can reduce all knowledge into a brief manual, and he will not want hearers. We know how frequently bodies of divinity, as they were called, and systems of theology were issued in times past, and we know that even in our own day thought-saving manuals are welcomed. But on the side of more sober theology, as on the side of truer science, a better spirit begins to prevail. Science recognizes the realms of religious consciousness, and enlightened theology welcomes the spirit of scientific inquiry. The nervous dread of knowledge is disappearing, and the religious teacher is content, even if not accepting all the so-called conclusions of science, to respect the scientific spirit and to recognize the value of the scientific method. There is a misunderstanding in some quarters respecting the nature of the change which, owing to the diffusion of scientific knowledge, has passed over the minds of men. It is sometimes believed that the change is one mainly of opinion, that is, from one set of views to another. I read the change differently. As I understand it, the real change in the intellectual attitude of to-day is the change from

an unscientific to a scientific method of dealing with all problems. In former times men's opinions were the result of a series of inferences from theories which had never been adequately tested. If I may use the expression, they were deductions from theories which were in the air and not upon solid ground. Certain phenomena, for instance, were explained on the theory that Nature abhorred a vacuum. But no one to-day will accept a metaphor as an explanation. Consequently, every theory is asked to substantiate itself. Theories, mark, are challenged not always because they are untrue, but because they demand acceptance upon a wrong or an insufficient basis. It needs to be remembered that a certain truth is not necessarily denied because a man points out that the grounds upon which it has been held are not true or sufficient. It is permissible for a man to say, "I think that the grounds on which you claim my assent to such and such a truth are not valid." Such a position is within a man's right, but the inference that therefore he does not believe the truth whose grounds he questions is wholly irrelevant and unwarranted; for it is conceivable that the objector

may have found better foundations for his belief than any which were previously advanced.

It seems to me that the true way of reading the challenge of the scientific method against any theological doctrine is not to regard it as an attack on the truth of the doctrine, but as simply a challenge to examine the basis upon which the doctrine stands. It may be said that the difference is insignificant, that the man who breaks up the foundation of my house destroys it quite as effectively as the man who batters down its walls. But the difference is not insignificant. It is surely a matter of real moment that we should not only believe truth, but that we should believe it on true grounds. If I believe in a spiritual world, I believe a truth; but there is surely a great difference between the man who believes in a spiritual world because he has heard a ghost story and the man who believes in a spiritual world because he knows that things spiritual are more real and more necessary to thought than things material, or because he himself has entered into that spiritual world and knows something of those things unseen which

are eternal. There is a real and important difference between a faith well based and a faith ill founded. Further the illustration is faulty: the overthrow of its foundations does mean the overthrow of the house, but the overthrow of the facts which were supposed to be the ground of a particular doctrine is not necessarily the overthrow of its truth. When we tell a man that his faith is ill founded, we do not necessarily mean that his faith is untrue. When a man is successful and tells me that he owes his success to the accidental finding of a horseshoe, I may dispute the connection of the horseshoe with his success without denying his prosperity. The searching for the true causes of phenomena does not destroy the phenomena.

The scientific spirit is indeed stern, and refuses to accept airy fancies, slight impressions, or ardent imaginations as evidence. It asks that at the root of conclusions there shall be facts, and that doctrines of all kinds shall show that they are not the thin-spun products of a logic which works from assumptions, but that they are conclusions which can be traced back in logical sequence to facts. All that is needful according to the

scientific method, as I understand it, is that whatever method we pursue, — whether from theories to test them by facts, or from facts to speculate towards theories, — the touch with facts shall be real and true, and that we shall be able to show that our conclusions are closely and indissolubly connected with clear and ultimate fact. The change, therefore, which has come over thought owing to the sovereignty of scientific method is not in the discredit of truth, but in the demand that it shall be properly based, and in the recognition that facts, and not mere theories, shall be found at the root of every doctrine.

The acceptance of the scientific method therefore demands that theories shall be related to facts. But on the other hand, it is no part of the scientific method to circumscribe arbitrarily the range of facts. It is, as I conceive it, therefore, a sin against the scientific spirit when men, in the name of science, exclude, as unworthy of consideration, facts connected with the moral and spiritual nature of man. Religion, according to such objectors, dwells in a realm of unreality. All the propositions, theories, doctrines, to be found among all religions belong to the house of

dreams, imaginations, emotions, desires, none of which set foot upon the hard crust of solid earth, and which therefore can yield no solid basis of fact. The whole realm, it is said, lies outside the range of scientific inquiry, and therefore in such a realm no fact capable of leading to any trustworthy or testable truth can be reached.

Suffer me to deal with this class of objection. According to it, religious history is to be set outside the region of scientific inquiry. In other words, while science can take cognizance of stars and suns, of the earth's crust, of plant life, and of animal life, it cannot take cognizance of the religious consciousness of man. Now I venture to think that a theory of this kind arises from a total misunderstanding of the nature, range, and meaning of the scientific method. The scientific method is not concerned with the nature of the facts submitted for inquiry except so far as to understand them. The scientific method does not pick and choose its facts any more than a bank picks and chooses the form in which money is paid across the counter. As the cashier at the bank accepts notes, cheques, gold, silver, or even copper, asking only that

they shall be good, so science accepts facts of all kinds, and finds her wealth, as the banker does, in their accumulation.

The man, then, who poses as scientific, and yet arbitrarily excludes from observation all facts except those which disclose themselves to the senses, is not a man of truly scientific spirit: he is a dogmatist as much as the most exclusive theologian; he is an obscurantist as much as the ecclesiastical infallibilist, who declines to recognize another class of facts. For there are facts which are as truly facts as those which are known to the senses, though we cannot weigh them as gold and silver are weighed. There are facts of mind, facts of soul, facts of affection, facts of history, facts which give rise to great ideas or to great discoveries, facts disclosed in the victory of great principles, which are just as really and just as truly facts as those which are disclosed to us by our senses. We do not quarrel with the demand of the scientific method that we should build our theories on some ultimate basis of fact; but we absolutely decline to put our reason in leading-strings, and to exclude from our observation whole ranges of fact. Least of all can we exclude from our

survey those facts which alone can make us acquainted with that which is the highest realm of man's nature, his mind and his soul. We refuse to believe that science demands this; and if it is demanded in the name of science, we are contented to reply in the language of Professor Ad. Franck: "Science it is to which we owe certain victories which may exercise a beneficent influence upon the wealth, the health, the happiness, the welfare, and the power of individuals and of nations. It is reason, however, which is the property of all, the ruling faculty, the distinctive and indefectible attribute of human nature itself. She, like the sun, may have her dawn, her twilight, and her eclipses, but no more than the sun can she be threatened with extinction: she indeed is more enduring than the sun; for she is eternal and she can never dream of herself sundered from eternity, whereas the sun itself will not survive our planetary system. It is reason, not science, which tells us that the beings and phenomena which we see here in their flow and ebb, which go to make up the world itself, could not be conceived of without a cause which had no beginning and will have no end. It is reason and not science which

tells us that the laws which govern this great world, and the special ends towards which all living beings are organized, with the intellectual light which grows within us, however dim its light may sometimes be, demand of necessity an intelligence supreme and universal.”¹ But I need not go further; the day when science banishes reason in the name of science, she will forfeit her title to the noble name she bears; for every science, like every monarch, is at best but a constitutional monarch, and is bound to answer for its actions at the bar of reason and common sense.

Let it never be forgotten that the attempt to limit the range of facts which man's reason has a right to examine will end in the dethronement of all true knowledge. There are facts which must be reckoned with, even though they remain unexplained and at present inexplicable. Force is such a fact, — a fact, real, demonstrable, inexplicable. To say that the full and final significance of a fact lies beyond our comprehension does not destroy its reality. We may meet with facts which are so closely united with mystery that we cannot

¹ Ad. Franck, *L'idée de Dieu dans ses rapports avec la Science*. Paris, 1891.

draw a clear line between what is intelligible and what is wonderful; but they are not, on this account, to be dismissed as unreal and visionary. In the pursuit of truth we must grapple with facts, no matter with what realms of wonder they may be associated. If force is such a fact, so also in their way are the forces of man's nature, which show themselves in thought, in aspiration, in worship, in effort to live conformably to some ideal. These also are facts, and these as much as the composition of gases, or the conditions of electrons, or the significance of radium, are legitimate fields of inquiry, and come within the scope and empire of theology as we understand it, namely, the knowledge of God's method of working in man and for man, for the development and maturing of his higher, that is, his real and enduring nature.

The range of theological investigation, therefore, is enlarged. The whole field of religious experience in the history and development of all faiths, Christian and non-Christian, can yield profit and advantage. Here we can study, as some hold, the working of the divine power, or as all admit, the disclosure of the religious needs of man's nature. Here

is the opportunity of investigating what the spiritual nature of man signifies, — what it demands and towards what it tends.

The principles which we have thus laid down are simple. We claim that the witness of all facts shall be admitted; we recognize the facts without no less than the facts within, and the facts within no less than the facts without. This being the case, what is the bearing of these principles upon our present subject? Our subject is Jesus Christ, and here as elsewhere we are face to face with a double set of facts. There are external facts respecting Christ, and there are inward facts. There is a historical Christ, and there is an experimental Christ. There is the Christ known to the general outward history of the world, and there is the Christ known to the spiritual consciousness of men. From both of these we must seek our facts.

Of the external facts alone I can speak tonight. These are simple and sufficient. Christ is a historical fact. The days in which it was thought possible to regard Him as mythical have passed away with the advent of historical criticism. "Strauss's recourse to the un-historical mythical hypothesis amounts," says

Professor M. Jastrow, "to an admission of failure to account for Jesus by natural causes, which is accentuated by the general rejection of this hypothesis."¹ "The religion of Christ," says Keim,² "reaches mysteriously back to his person."

But the external facts of Christ go beyond the fact of his existence in history. His influence in history is no less a fact. His hands reached forth over the after-history of the world, and He fashioned the cradle of the civilization which we now enjoy. When the world of the Roman Empire broke in pieces, and when mankind needed some outward and guardian influence, the Christian Church was ready, and she became the cradle of the new world. How she fashioned, softened, and restrained manners and morals in those years of transition is written in history. Races divergent in character came under Christian influence, and in a crude and external fashion the whole tone of social life and feeling was raised from one of rough violence and brutal manners to that of devotion to chivalrous ideals and reverence for the symbols of a faith calculated

¹ *Study of Religion*, p. 179.

² *Jesus of Nazara*, vol. ii. p. 174. London, 1876.

to elevate human character. Thus Jesus Christ exercised in the infant days of modern civilization a real formative moral influence.

But the fact of his influence goes further still. The day came when the growing power of individualism made itself felt. The claims to freedom in thought and belief, in life and action, began to be heard among the peoples of Western Europe. The day of individualism had come. Had Jesus Christ, whose influence was strong in the early years of modern civilization, no message for the days of its adolescence? Was the power which He exercised in a collective manner through the Church equal to the new revolution? Yes, for the message of the Christ was already there. The religion of Christ in its earliest form was a personal religion. The apostles came warning every man, and teaching every man, with the great purpose and hope of presenting every man perfect in Christ. The recognition of religion as a personal matter had never died out of the heart of Christendom. The mystic had prepared the way for the assertion of that individualism in religion which was a note of the Reformation, and the "De Imitatione Christi" had appeared, reminding every man that Christ

had given the pattern life to every man. Christ was realized as the Redeemer of the individual soul, as the true standard and ethical ideal of human life. Thus Jesus Christ may be said to have climbed to the moral throne of the world. There He has taken his seat, and from thence He has exercised undisputed ethical sway. His moral supremacy has been recognized by multitudes who cannot be said to have fully accepted his yoke. To Strauss, strongly sceptical in spirit, "Christ is the one character without the idea of whom in the mind personal piety is impossible." To Keshub Chunder Sen, a gifted Oriental, who held himself aloof from all Christian organizations, Jesus Christ was the one who "by his wisdom illuminated and by his power saved the world." James Martineau — true philosopher, gifted also with the power of the seer — declared that "the man of sorrows is an exemplar, the Son of God our spiritual ideal." One whose memory Massachusetts still cherishes with reverence, William Ellery Channing, declared that it was the combination in Christ of "the spirit of humanity in its holiest and tenderest form with the consciousness of unrivalled and divine glories which constituted the most wonderful distinc-

tion of this wonderful character." The words of J. S. Mill, who said that there was no better life for man to live than such a life as Christ would approve, are familiar to you all. Thus has Christ become the accepted ideal of human life, — the conscience of humanity.

And in our own day there are not wanting signs that the recognition of Christ's moral and spiritual power is growing in intensity. One of your own professors has in a noteworthy essay remarked upon the widespread tendency to get back to Christ.¹ In all schools of thought, and in all walks of life, we find men, perplexed and troubled, turning wistful eyes to Christ as though He held the golden key to the problems which press upon our modern life. Anxious souls disturbed about modern criticism look to Him, believing that there is still in Him some power which can lift men's thoughts into a realm of faith, unhaunted by the fear of what may befall should some perplexing critical problem defy solution. Men engaged in daily toil turn from the cheap remedies of shallow talkers to Him who worked in Nazareth, believing that from Him will come the teaching which may solve

¹ See *Hibbert Journal*, vol. i. No. 4, p. 641.

some at least of our economic difficulties. One honoured in your midst has reminded us that the problem of the city, the problem of labour, the problem of social reform, are Christian problems. Everywhere there are signs of a growing faith that there are in Christ still unexplored riches of teaching and unused outgoings of power which can avail to help in the complicated problems of modern life. There are thousands who realize that real allegiance to Christ demands not only the recognition of the moral standard given by Him, but a life wholly inspired by the spirit which animated Him who has so wonderfully influenced the world.

Multitudes who would fain see greater harmony in Christendom look to Him, believing that in drawing closer to Him the churches may find the way to overcome denominational difficulties. The missionary in heathen lands realizes that it is only in a recognition of the supremacy of Christ that the waste of Christian energy may be avoided and the collective influence of Christian missionary enterprise be given the full freedom of its working energy.

Here, then, is Jesus Christ presenting to the world a character which exercises a strong

and dominant influence over men, — not over the ignorant and foolish, not over the naturally devout only, but over men who have sought to free their minds from prejudice, and who have prided themselves in their independence of traditional judgments.

Here is one who appears to be so near to us, and yet so far above us, that He awes even while He attracts us, who convinces us of our faults even while He compels us by his sympathy, who as our ideal rebukes our shortcomings and quickens our consciences in their judgments on ourselves; and yet who is so complete a revelation of love that no sinner shrinks from his side. Centuries of growing and imperious human needs have left his power unexhausted, for still the perplexed, the aspiring, the weary, and the bravely patient, the souls who feel their weakness and the souls who long to serve their fellow men, turn to Him as though He held in his pierced hands the true secret of life.

II

CHRIST THE PERFECT TYPE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

THE progress of the world's civilization owes much to the influence of great personalities; and of these personalities those are greatest who possess a power of influence in the two realms of thought and action: to enlarge the range of ideas and at the same time to quicken men's moral activities is to confer a double benefit on mankind. With whatever differences of view we may regard Jesus Christ, we must admit that He holds a place among the great personalities who have profoundly influenced human history. He gave wider scope to the outlook of men's thoughts; He stimulated their moral capacities; his character has been a perpetual inspiration and challenge to man's conduct. But He has been more than this: He has not only touched the depths of man's moral life, but He has given a new and deeper significance to his spiritual life; for Jesus Christ was not merely a great moral teacher

and a great moral example, but He was a great religious personality, whose spiritual power is a fact in the world's history. We must measure the meaning of this fact; to do so, let us state it in another form. It is admitted that in Jesus Christ we have a great exemplar, who has given to man a noble standard of conduct. Conduct, according to Matthew Arnold, is three parts of life. We may admit that conduct is three fourths of life, if we do not forget that the remaining fourth part of life is not to be ignored. Conduct is three fourths of life, as the seen portion of a growing tree may be three fourths of the whole; but the unseen portion, which may be but one quarter of the whole, contains the root. Conduct may be three fourths of life, but the life-force from which conduct springs is of more moment than conduct itself. The unseen part of life contains the springs of action, the motives, the hopes, the fears, the ambitions, the aims; the unseen portion contains the root from which the whole growth takes its health and strength; the unseen portion is the generating station in which power is translated into movement or light.

Religion has to deal with conduct, but if

religion deals with conduct only, it is in danger of becoming a mere moralism; religion deals with conduct by influencing its hidden sources; religion touches not only the actions of men, but she enters into the hidden realm of the heart; she brings power to bear upon the religious consciousness of man.

It is into the region of man's religious consciousness that we too must enter, if we are to understand rightly the power and influence of Jesus Christ, and in doing this we enter upon the true field of inquiry.

We enter the true field of inquiry, for we enter into the region in which religion can be observed as a working force. We are not for the moment concerned with other aspects of religion. Religion is often thought of as a system of dogma, or an order of ceremonial, or as a group of sentiments. These have their place in the region of religious manifestation, but at present I am only asking you to think of religion as the expression of a distinct working force in human history.

We are to study it as a working power; to do so is a gain. We approach its study without prejudice or prepossession; we look for the tokens of this working power in all direc-

tions, and there is disclosed to us a wide range of facts; we survey the field of human life, and religion shows itself as a working power under many and widely differing conditions; we pass beyond the borders of the religions with which we are familiar, and we enter into territories under the domination of other faiths; we do not limit our observations to our own day or our own country; we are ready to explore other ages and other climes.

Now in this broad territory theology can gather priceless riches. She need no longer dwell in a circumscribed domain; she can freely take possession of the whole region of human life, and learn from those suggestive varieties of experiences which are expressed in the religious consciousness of every tongue and every people. The value of the treasures so gathered exists for us, whether we regard the religions of other lands from a past or a present-day standpoint. In the past the prevalent view was that non-Christian religions were purely human products: they could claim no share in a divine inspiration or authority; in the present day there is a disposition to see in all human history the guiding influence of that power which never left man without wit-

ness. But whichever view we adopt, these religions tell us something concerning the religious consciousness of man. For in studying them we may note the landing-stages of man's religious progress. Hence, whether these faiths are the efforts of unaided humanity, or efforts in which some higher guidance mingled, they help us to understand man as a religious being. Who does not feel how profoundly interesting the question of man's religious consciousness becomes in the light of the code of Hammurabi, or through the study of the faiths of Egypt or of Mexico? The story of religious humanity becomes more vividly realized by us; our sympathy is evoked; the record appeals to something in our common nature; we are not studying text-books or analyzed systems; we are watching the development of a drama, — it is a drama of entrancing interest, for it is the drama of the soul of man; we see how everywhere men are grasping after God, reaching forward to the power of rest and changelessness; we are full of profound sympathy, for in them the very soul of humanity cries:

“ I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope, —
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.”

In these studies we are present at a wonderful disclosure of man's nature and man's needs. As man strives to build, we learn the elements which are indispensable to a true and lasting faith. Man is expressing himself in terms of his eternal aspirations. We are observing the manifestations of his religious consciousness as it struggles alone, or as it responds to providential influences ; we are taken into confidence, and we gather facts which enable us to measure the true inward nature of man. In this realm theology may gather facts of priceless significance: she can mark man's deep religiousness, his sorrows, his weakness, his misgivings, his quick-rising hopes, his noble confidence, or his perhaps more noble despair. As the great possibilities of this study break upon our view, we can recognize what measure of truth lies in Pfeleiderer's remark, that no man can justly claim to be a theologian who knows no other religion than his own ; for he who can measure the significance of man's struggles toward faith and light and God can alone adequately estimate the real significance of the faith which brings rest to his own soul.

If theology, then, gains something in the

extension of the realms of religious inquiry, we claim that science gains something also. True science will scorn no facts; it belongs only to a pretentious and narrow view of science to disdain every fact outside those of the physical universe; true science will accept and examine into the significance of all facts, and will therefore welcome every new mine from which facts more precious than golden ore can be extracted. The facts derived from the history of man's religious consciousness throw light upon the nature of man; and the study of man's nature, being the highest study open to science, can present us with facts of supreme value. Religion has worked and is at work in the world; it is a power closely allied with man's innermost nature. We can study this power at work; we can note, weigh, and classify the facts connected with its working. One of the simplest facts which we gather is the fact that religion is a very real power in the world. Just as the scientific historian could not write a satisfactory history of the changes which have taken place in the climate and the distribution of fauna and flora on the surface of our globe without reckoning with those changes which are due to man, so neither

could the historian of human life write a full and adequate history of human development without reference to the part which religion has played in that wonderful story of progress. Religion has been a real power in the building of human civilization. It has been, moreover, an unconquerable power; it has been sometimes the hope and sometimes the despair of the men of light and leading; it cannot be ignored, even in modern days; it entered into the arena of European interests when it inspired the Crusaders; it influenced the direction of those antagonisms which led to the Thirty Years' War; it exercised strong influence and increased the difficulties of diplomatists in the negotiations which terminated in the Crimean War. It has been often the despair of politicians; and though in moments of impatience at the absurdities with which it has been associated men have sometimes wished to banish it altogether, their efforts have been in vain. Even as they passed edict and decree against it, it has scorned their sentence of banishment, and has appeared unweakened before its judges. The prison doors have been shut upon it with all safety, but it has passed through every barrier, and has, in spite of bars

and bolts, appeared in the city as the teacher of men ; it has justified Ste. Beuve's saying, " Chassez la Religion par la porte, elle rentre par la fenêtre."

Religion, then, is a power in human history ; it may be denounced as evil or eulogised as good, but it must be admitted to be a real power. We may extend our thought, and we may discriminate ; it is a power, and as a power it has sometimes seemed to be bad. It has been evil when it has appeared with the hook and the flail, with torch and faggot, with knout and rack, with the car of Juggernaut at the furnace of Moloch. But it has been good when it has appeared with the good tidings of righteousness, peace, self-sacrifice, and love ; for there was a time when, if I may borrow from Dean Hodges, " the king came." It has been good when it has inspired the devotion of a St. Paul, the sweet saintliness of a St. Francis ; it has been a benison to man when it has prompted the philanthropy of a John Harvard, a Wilberforce, an Elizabeth Fry, or a Florence Nightingale ; it has been noble when it has fired the hearts of martyrs like St. Stephen, or Latimer, or Bishop Patteson ; it has been heroic when it has sent forth a John

Eliot, or a Henry Martyn, or a David Livingstone. If it is impossible to deny the ills which have sometimes followed in its wake, it is equally impossible to ignore the splendid services which have been wrought for humanity under its inspiration. It may suit shallow people to treat religion in an airy fashion as an unimportant or negligible thing, but no serious or thoughtful observer of facts will deny that religion is a real force which has profoundly modified human history by its influence upon human character. It has shown itself as a power, as possessed of an obstinate vitality and an invincible strength; and as we note its history, we may observe that it exhibits a strange constancy of aim and purpose.

For as we study religion as a working power among men, there is one constantly recurring feature, namely, the persistent desire of man to establish relations between himself and the unseen power or powers around him.

This desire on the part of man is a main characteristic of the religious consciousness of man. Religion, indeed, might be defined as the effort to establish relationship between man and the unseen powers of the universe; but whether we can so define religion or

not, the tendency or desire is clearly and constantly manifested. It would take too long to enter into any wide survey of religion in order to prove the existence of this desire or characteristic feature of religion. We can satisfy ourselves without any elaborate inquiry. One scene described by the prophet Isaiah gives such vivid expression to this desire that we feel the picture he sets before us to be typical. He describes the man who cuts down a tree, kindles a fire, cooks his food, and then from the residue of the tree makes a god. It is a very crude and ignorant kind of worship, but it is drawn from a wide experience. The man is aware that his life is one of relationship with the products of the earth. He lives by the food which earth supplies, and from the earth also he derives the fuel with which to prepare his food and to restore the ebbing heat of his tired frame. He recognizes his relationship with things material, but he is surrounded by dangers which take him by surprise. Round about him are mysterious agencies which terrify and bewilder him. He can protect his body from cold and starvation by things which bear relationship to his physical needs; he would fain protect himself also from unknown perils

and unfathomed fears by entering into fitting and friendly relationship with power or powers which are unseen. Accordingly he takes steps to establish some relationship; he will devise for himself such worship and offering as may secure the friendliness of the unknown powers. The desire is evident and natural, though the man's way of expressing it is simple and crude. And does not the same desire to be on terms of friendly relationship with the unseen and ruling power of the universe find vigorous and unaffected expression in all ages at a time of panic? Let a sudden peril threaten a group of travellers by sea; let the situation be apparently hopeless, and the immediate impulse of a large number will be to fall upon their knees or cry aloud in prayer. From the moment that death tells them that the happy relationships of earth are about to be broken up, these panic-stricken people seek to assure themselves that the relationship with the unseen ruler of all is friendly and secure. There is no need to scorn the panic of the modern or the dull superstition of the ancient. Both are acting according to a strong and natural impulse.

Man learns all he knows about the world

and the world powers by his relationship with them; he has learned to distinguish himself and his own identity by the realization of his relationship with objects and persons other than himself; it is through these relations with things and powers outside himself that he has learned nearly all he knows; he knows his home by its relation to other places; he knows society and civilization by their influence upon himself. He advances his knowledge in the same way; what he knows to-day he knows by its relation to what he knew yesterday, for knowledge is the result of observation, comparison, and classification, all of which result from the relationship of one thing to another. Thus the desire to know and to measure relationship is fostered in man by a continuous experience.

It is quite natural, then, that man should seek for the relationship with the more mysterious and subtle powers which environ his life or disclose themselves to his thoughts and emotions. And once the principle of seeking to establish relationship with the unseen powers has begun to work in man's life, it undergoes development. Primarily, man's impulse is one of simple self-interest: he

wishes to establish relations with a power or powers from which he desires protection or guidance or beneficence. In another stage the instinct is not so completely or individually self-interested: religion becomes tribal; the god is recognized as the god of the tribe or family; the worship is designed for tribal safety and prosperity; individual interests are made subject to collective welfare; the relationship sought in worship is one which it is hoped and believed will secure the well-being of the tribe as a whole. But it is a step still further in advance when it is realized that, in order to establish harmonious relationship with the Great Power which is worshipped, the man or the tribe must bring themselves into harmony with the will of the Great Power; worship and sacrifice alone must not be relied upon to bring the succouring and beneficent power of the god on the side of the tribe; the worshipper must not expect the god to acquiesce in his wish, but he must learn to act and live in harmony with the will of the god.

Then it becomes clear that nature is not capricious, and that the gods are not beings to be coaxed into favouritism or bribed into

preferences ; then it becomes clear that there is an order after which man must fashion himself. In the realization of this, ethical considerations begin to enter into religious worship. This is a crisis moment of religious development ; it is expressed in the loftiest fashion and in the clearest ethical form in the prophets of Israel, who dared to tell their countrymen that the God of Israel ruled in righteousness and was no respecter of persons ; his power and favour were not to be bought ; his past benefits upon Israel were not to be construed into ■ favouritism which would be blind to their violations of the moral law ; to obey was better than sacrifice ; God asked not sacrifice, but the humble and the contrite soul that sought to bring itself and its life into living harmony of obedience with God.

For the first time, perhaps, in human history — certainly at no previous time so vividly — it was understood that man must alter his conduct or better his character in order to be in harmony with the God of all right ; only in such ethical harmony could this relationship with God be established.

The establishment of this principle furnishes ■ trustworthy test of quality which

we may apply to the study of religions. Religion is a force. We have waived the question whether it is necessarily a force for good; at times it has seemed to help forward evil; at other times it has inspired the love of good. The test which we can apply here lies in the ethical demand which any religion makes. The rank of a religion is settled by the degree in which ethic is linked with it. This is no arbitrary or unusual test. It is the test which modern students of comparative religious history apply. Professor M. Jastrow writes, "Religious movements inaugurated by the personal influence of certain individuals, result in the most perfect union of religion with ethics."¹ The test is one which commends itself to common sense. It has been practically in the minds of men in ancient and modern times. It underlies the exclamation of Sophocles, "When gods do ill, why should I worship them?"² The late Dr. Jowett recalled it when he reminded us that the felt divorce between religion and ethics led to the disbelief of ancient faiths. "Men only began to suspect that they [the stories of the gods of

¹ *Study of Religion*, p. 221.

² *Philoctetes*, line 451-2.

Olympus] were fictions when they recognized them to be immoral.”¹ It is the same instinct which leads us to distrust cant; for cant is fervour for a religion which is easily divorced from moral principle. The people who are scrupulous in religious observances and unscrupulous in moral conduct fail to commend religion, because, in the view of most of us, a religion which connives at moral laxity is not religious enough to be worthy of rank in human esteem. If, then, religions can be so classified that some are found to be inimical to morals, others indifferent to morals, others again only accidentally favourable to morals, and yet again others by essential nature conducive to morals, we possess some power to classify them according to their respective rank.

Now it is not my duty here to attempt any such classification of religions. Our subject is Jesus Christ, and all that I am concerned to show is that in the religion of Jesus Christ the link between religion and morals is not accidental or transient, but essential and indissoluble; for it is a manifestation of pure

¹ Plato, *Rep.* II. 377, 378; Professor Jowett's 3d ed., vol. iii. p. xxxvii; see also p. 60.

ethic, based upon such an eternal and harmonious relationship with God that its ethic is inevitable. Religion is the effort to establish relationship with the unseen world, and the question of supreme importance in this inquiry is, as we have seen, whether a religion, in seeking to establish such a relationship, includes a fundamental purity of ethic. This leads to the question of the relationship with the unseen exhibited in Jesus Christ. We are not about to study his teaching. I prefer rather to study Him as one who exhibits to us the possibilities of religious consciousness.

In the first place, the founder of Christianity was much more than a good man ; He was, as we have seen, one who was unique and complete in the moral greatness of his character. In Him ethical force and beauty are supremely evident. This will be allowed, but does this supreme ethical quality unite with his religious consciousness ? Is it a part of it ? We might answer this by saying Christianity is Christ ; in Him is the exalted type of moral character, and as He is himself both his religion and his ethic, the ethical and religious qualities meet indissolubly bound together in Him. But I prefer to follow the slower course,

and to study the religious consciousness of Jesus Christ as it has been placed before us and ascertain its relationship with ethical principles.

Now when we study this religious consciousness, I note that He discloses a character or spirit which is in complete harmony with the unseen. We notice this beautiful harmony in his meek spirit of dependence upon God. The impulse to snatch at desired objects, regardless of the existence of any divine order, is very common among us. In Jesus Christ there is a happily acquiescent faith which relies upon the divine order. He will not claim anything for himself; He will wait upon the laws of the divine order of things; He believes in the goodness which is at the back of things. We see this in the story of the temptation; it is immaterial to our purpose here whether we give a more or less material interpretation to the story; the spiritual or psychical significance of the narrative is clear enough. Jesus Christ is shown to us refusing by any rash or personal choice to anticipate the will of Heaven or to violate its order. However advantageous it may be that He should live, or win the favour of his coun-

trymen, or establish an ideal sovereignty in the world, He will not seek any of these things by a word or deed which implies distrust of the laws of the divine kingdom ; He believes so profoundly in the laws of that kingdom that He will take no step which places himself outside those laws ; He relies so implicitly upon the goodness which rules all things that He will live in a complete dependence upon that goodness. This quiet dependence is a token of harmonious relationship with the unseen power which governs all. The spirit which He showed in the beginning of his ministerial career remained with Him to the end. In spite of disappointments and apparent failures, of desertions and detractions, He kept the spirit of quiet reliance upon the eternal goodness unshaken to the last. He is in the world, not to violate but to fulfil his Father's will, and therefore though the way be the way of tears and thorns and death, He pursues it undaunted to the end. "Thy will be done," "How then shall the scriptures be fulfilled?" — both sayings attest absolute confidence in the will of God, a confidence therefore in the justice and rightness of the divine order.

Parallel to this confidence is the strong and unrelaxing grasp which He shows upon righteousness. The great gulf between Him and his contemporaries is realized when we find Him insisting that religiousness apart from righteousness is not merely valueless, but vicious. His quarrel with the Pharisees is that in affirming religion they destroyed ethic. A man might in their view plead religion as justifying the neglect of duties which the simplest ethics of nature demanded. They made the fundamental divine law of no effect through traditions for which they claimed religious sanction. By pleading "Corban" a man might contract himself out of the most sacred obligations. To the mind of Jesus Christ this habit of thought was abhorrent. The duties which were imposed by nature were of God: to set aside the principles of simple moral law was to sin against God. God would not accept the formal homage of those who left unfulfilled the duties which God himself had by the very nature of things entrusted to man. Hence if a man brought his gift to the altar and there remembered that the sacred bond of brotherhood had been violated, he must leave his gift, and first be reconciled to his brother. The religious character of the

offering was impossible while the laws of natural rights were broken. In other words, religion without ethics was preposterous. Moral duties were religious duties ; God's order was a righteous order.

Towards the fulfilment of that order Jesus Christ set his face with all earnestness. He was in the world to fulfil his Father's will ; He found his satisfaction — yes, his inward nutriment — in carrying out that will. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." So He spake.

Further, his harmony with his Father's will goes beyond the passionate devotion to righteousness ; He realizes that his Father's will is a will instinct with love towards all ; He loves to think of his Father's wide and impartial beneficence. He beholds the sun as it mounts to heaven and pours down its invigorating beams on the homes of men ; He marks the enriching showers which the clouds pour from the sky upon the earth, and He rejoices to think that God's sun and rain fall upon all, — upon the evil and upon the good. He lives his own life in harmony with this idea of magnanimous beneficence : He did good, not to any select circle or chosen band

of adoring followers ; He went about doing good, and good fell from his hand bountifully and unquestioningly upon all. His reward might be ingratitude, disloyalty, betrayal, or just nothing at all ; but He came to diffuse good, to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers, to scatter benefits continuously, ungrudgingly, to ask for and to look for no reward. In the end, those who remained with Him were few, the countless multitudes whom He had fed and blessed failed Him or forgot Him, but like his Father He had shed his benediction upon the evil and upon the good.

Thus He lives his life in the quiet consciousness of a complete harmony with the order of things. He enjoys an undisturbed relationship with the unseen ; throughout his life there is no sign of any loosening of a single link which binds Him to the Divine ; no dark shadow blots out the light or chills the warmth which streams upon Him from Heaven.

In Him we see the true climax of man's religious consciousness ; we witness the life of one in whom the sense of right never failed, and in whom the sense of union with God was never broken. He who has become so admittedly the moral standard of character

lives a life of unbroken harmony with God. We reach in Him the spiritual roots of being ; we find ourselves in the presence of One who possesses the great secret of life ; in Him there is disclosed that intimate relationship with God which not only gives the strength of an inward repose, but keeps the ethical insight undimmed. Consider how much this means. There have been men whose natures seemed to hold a gifted harmony with the order of things ; all the world to them was beauty and strength and life ; they could close their eyes and hear, when others were oppressed with the silence of nature, the ineffable harmonies of the Universe ; they opened their eyes, and earth and sea and sky and the lives of men seemed for them to be bathed in unclouded light. But these men have seldom possessed that indignant quality of the soul which, seeing around them cruelty and unrighteousness, cries out against the injustice of things. Men who are framed with sensitive perception of man's harmony with nature seldom care to gaze upon the darker side of things, and when they do, appear to lack the capacity for feeling the stirrings of a righteous wrath. Carlyle failed to awaken in Emerson any deep sense of the

discord of things when he tried to rouse it in him by a sight of the darker aspects of London life. *Il n'y a pas de dissonances pour les sourds*, and though Emerson's ears were open to many of the harmonies of heaven, he was deaf to some of the voices of earth.

On the other hand, those generous spirits which are quickly stirred to indignant revolt by the contemplation of human suffering and wrong do not often possess the quiet peace of Heaven. From their hearts there go up those generously wrathful blasphemies which startle the conventionally religious. Such men speak as Job spoke, or they adopt the self-indulgent pessimism of Omar Khayyám. But in Jesus Christ the deep conviction of righteousness caused Him to break out in noble wrath against oppression and wrong; but yet He never showed a sign of pessimism; his faith in eternal goodness was as strong as his conviction of the overwhelming duty of righteousness. He kept peace of heart and quiet trust in the order of things without losing capacity for righteous wrath; He could be wrathfully sensitive on behalf of the oppressed without doubting the ultimate victory of goodness. The reason was simple: He believed in the

love and the goodness which was enthroned above the universe. He lived in complete harmony with that love. Men had sought to establish an abiding relationship with the powers of the unseen world. Christ possessed as a natural inheritance that which they had sought; He lived in the peace and power of a fully realized relationship between himself and God. Hence there was to Him the possession of inward peace and an undimmed perception of the power of righteousness.

Hence Jesus Christ takes as man a place alike in the realms of ethics and of faith. He gives to us the moral standard of life, the ethical ideal; He discloses the culminating power of the religious consciousness, for He is, in the deep harmony of his relationship with God, the mystic ideal also. While men were labouring to establish relationship with the unseen; while some, failing and despairing, broke into angry revolt against life, and others, deceiving themselves, reached a false repose by shutting out of sight the facts of ugly moral problems; Jesus Christ, keenly alive to evil and warm to defend the weak and the oppressed, keeping the ethical standard high and the ethical perception clear, lived a

life of simple and unruffled heart repose. He realizes, and we see that He realizes, the double ideal, the ideal of righteousness and of inward peace. He realizes the perfect harmony, the peace which is no counterfeit; He lives a human life, but we feel that He lives all the time in the serene atmosphere of Heaven. In Him we get a glimpse of what the soul is whose birth and being are from the eternal love. He seems something more than a soul filled with the divine; He seems to be one whose manhood is taken into God, and we no longer wonder that his utterances are sweet and satisfying; we listen to Him, and his teaching comes to us fresh as the breath of the sea and musical as the sound of falling rain.

III

CHRIST THE TEACHER OF PRINCIPLES

THE progress of the world has been due to the influence of great personalities, but also to the power of great ideas. Jesus Christ, we have seen, helped the world forward by the power of his personality. In Him men have recognized the embodiment of the supreme ethic of life. But He was more than a moral standard; He exhibited the highest ideal of religious consciousness; He lived in deep and unbroken harmony of spirit with the divine and eternal order; He was a great ethical example; He was also a great religious personality.

It often happens, however, that good men are dumb: they may live according to lofty spiritual principles, but they may have little power to explain those principles to others; they are the actors in life's drama, but not the teachers of men. But the truly great are seldom dumb: they speak not alone through their personality, but they illuminate human

life by the teaching of great principles. In this sense also Christ is great, for He has given to the world not only the power of his personal influence and character, but the power of his teaching. He was great in the possession of a threefold power; He embodied the ideal of conduct; He showed that He possessed a transcendent quality of soul, and to this he added greatness and lucidity of teaching.

It is to Christ as a Teacher that we now turn. Three questions meet us. Have we a sufficiently authentic record to know what his teaching really was? Does his teaching embody clear and consistent principles, and if so, what were they? Have the principles which He taught any fundamental truth in which they cohere?

1. Our first question is regarding the authenticity of the records of our Lord's teaching. This need not delay us long. It is true that there have been those who have declared that we actually know little or nothing about Christ's teaching. But this is only the echo of a bygone theory. I need not tell you here in Harvard that this theory finds utterance only among those whose ideas of New Tes-

tament critical study are somewhat belated. When, then, we are asked, How can we safely seek the principles of Christ's teaching if there is insecurity concerning the historical value of the gospel record of his sayings? we need not enter upon any elaborate discussion. It is enough to say that, so far as our general purpose is concerned, the records we have are sufficient, and this sufficiency is frankly admitted not only by conservative but by what are called advanced critics.

Thus Wernle, whom no one will describe as possessing any critical timidity, acknowledges the debt which we owe to St. Matthew's Gospel as a collection of the Logia of Christ. "He brought together," he says, "the principal sayings in which God's will is clearly taught to all men by Jesus. . . . Without any additions of his own, merely by selecting the words of everlasting life, he has bequeathed to us a picture of all that is essential in Christianity, which is striking in its grandeur."¹

Again, speaking of the Fourth Gospel, whose authorship has been so hotly contested, Wernle acknowledges that its substance was

¹ *Beginnings of Christianity*, pp. 148, 149. London and New York, 1903.

given by "a disciple of Jesus who was more deeply penetrated than the rest with the original spirit and the inward form of the teaching of his Master."

As regards the First and Fourth Gospels, then, the positions adopted by these critics are sufficient for our purpose. And concerning the Synoptic Gospels generally, a similar position is taken up by critics of strong and independent minds. For example, Jülicher, a workman-like writer, who identifies himself unhesitatingly with the liberal wing of criticism, makes the frankest acknowledgment of the historical value of the Gospels. "The true merit of the Synoptists," he says, "is that, in spite of all the poetical touches they employ, they did not repaint, but only handed on, the Christ of history."¹ And again: "As a rule, there lies in all the Synoptic Logia a kernel of individual character so inimitable and so fresh that their authenticity is raised above all suspicion."²

Again, Harnack³ tells us that "Sixty years ago David Friedrich Strauss thought that he

¹ *Introduction to New Testament*, p. 371. London, 1904.

² *Ibid.*, p. 372.

³ *What is Christianity?* pp. 20, 31. London, 1901.

had almost entirely destroyed the historical credibility not only of the fourth, but also of the first three Gospels as well. The historical criticism of two generations has succeeded in restoring that credibility in its main outlines." And hence he speaks of the Synoptic Gospels as weighty because among other things "they offer us a plain picture of Jesus' teaching in regard both to its main features and to its individual application."

We are therefore on firm ground in turning to the teaching of Christ as given in the Gospels, and the more so, since we are not taking a course which depends on mere exactitude of phrase; we are only seeking to reach the principles to which He gave expression. We desire to grasp the fundamental ideas of his teaching and to catch its spirit. We may go forward with confidence, since we are assured by those who are admittedly not very credulous critics that we may rely upon the general authenticity of these Logia of Christ.

2. We turn now to our second question, Does the teaching of Christ disclose any clear principles? There are some who seem to regard the teaching of Christ as a series of

obiter dicta. The Logia of the Gospel are, in their view, a collection of more or less disconnected aphorisms or choice sayings. They are not to be examined with the view of detecting a connected system of religious philosophy; they are a treasury of splendid fragments, in which it is futile to look for any governing harmony of ideas. Writers of this class delight in calling attention to the undogmatic character of Christ's teaching, and to the strong contrast between it and the systematic dogmatism of later Christian teaching.

It is, of course, obvious that we must not expect to find in the sayings of Jesus Christ anything analogous to what was called by sixteenth and seventeenth century divines a Body of Divinity. To look for this would be to betray a total misapprehension of the spirit of the Gospels. But while we may readily admit that Christ's teaching was not like that of the later systematic theologians, and was never worked up into any formal body of divinity, yet we have read it to little profit if we regard it as a mere collection of detached sayings. Christ, indeed, displays no anxiety to weld what He says into a doctrinal

unity of conception, He does not theologize in the dogmatic sense; but his teaching could never have possessed great influence, or achieved lasting results, had it been fragmentary and incoherent. On the contrary, his teaching, while it exhibits an infinite variety of forms, will be found to possess a few pregnant and constantly recurring principles.

And here may I be allowed for a moment to say that in the phraseology which I use in addressing you, I distinguish between these three words, — principle, doctrine, and dogma? It is not unusual to find these words, doctrines, dogmas, the truths of religion, the principles of religion, used as if they were equivalents for one another. I do not propose to use them in any such loose fashion if I can help it. To me dogma is the crystallization of doctrine; doctrine is the attempt to exhibit to the human mind the value or significance of some principle. In the nature of the case, the doctrine is only a partial exhibition of the principle. Principles transcend doctrines, and the same principle may be at the back of more than one doctrine. As a principle is a wider thing than doctrine, so doctrine is a somewhat looser

thing than dogma. Doctrine becomes dogma when it is translated into formal or logical expression. This is a digression, but perhaps necessary that you may understand what I am endeavouring to set before you, since misapprehension as to the special sense in which terms are employed may produce misunderstanding.

I may perhaps lead our minds back to the point at which I digressed, if I say that St. Paul tends to express Christianity in a doctrinal fashion. His doctrines gave the opportunity for dogmas, which appeared later in creeds and confessions; the doctrines may be expressed in the creeds or confessions, but as a rule the confessions give the doctrines in dogmatic form. In Christ's teaching you find doctrine in the general sense, but his doctrinal teaching seldom runs to formal dogmatic expression. He is the teacher of great principles, from which doctrines and dogmas have been derived. But the principles which He lays down include more than can be expressed in any one dogma or even doctrine which has been derived from it. I cannot, therefore, accept the view that the teaching of Christ is a series of isolated but brilliant

sayings. As we study them, we find that his teaching is really the exposition of a few clear principles of wide application and urgent importance. He is a teacher, however, who seeks to win men ; He knows that the best way of winning men to the understanding of truth is to exhibit in friendly and familiar forms the great principles which appeal to the whole man, rather than any dogmatic statements which may lodge in the intellect without ever penetrating to the soul. Principles are not in any sense to be regarded as the denial of any truth which can be set forth in doctrinal or dogmatic form ; rather, principles are the life of the truth which dogma afterwards endeavours to express.

Thus principles, if understood as I seek to make them understood, are capable of operating with great and useful influence upon dogma. By going back to principles, we can recover the inner significance of the dogma ; by noting it, we may be enabled to recast the form of the dogma without losing any truth which it contains. Indeed, releasing it from the form in which it has been too long current, we may restore it to life, for dogmas are often the winding-sheet of truth ; they con-

tain truth, it is true, but they too often strangle what they hold. But when we perceive the principle, we get back to the life of the dogma, we can revive the truth which lay buried there. Now if principles of this kind are to be found in the teaching of Jesus Christ, do we not discover a reason for the cry of "Back to Christ"? But let that wait for a later stage of our inquiry. At present I am only concerned to show that there is a real harmony in Christ's teaching, because it does set forth principles, few and clear, fitted to the heart and life.

This will be apparent when we contrast the teaching of Christ with the teaching which was current and popular in his day. The teacher, as we know, was everywhere. Men of a certain class of ambition loved to be called Rabbi, for the teacher held a recognized position; he spoke according to the lore of his time; he added, perhaps, a new interpretation, but he played the same tune as his fellows, perhaps with some variation. But Christ was at once recognized as a teacher of a different order. He spoke, and what carried conviction was not "learning, but the force of truth;" He spoke with "the irresistible force

of a Divine message ;”¹ He identified himself with no party, whether Pharisee or Sadducee or Essene ; He kept aloof from the political intrigues or theories of his contemporaries. Where they dreamed of a kingdom of emancipated Israelites, or of the revival of an empire like that of Solomon, He lived in the presence of a kingdom which the world hardly realized, the kingdom of God. This was the kingdom which it was worth any sacrifice to win. Men had spoken of it before ;² but with Jesus Christ it was no vague dream, no product of ambitious thinking ; it was a present reality ; it was at hand ; it was among men ; it was within them. It was no transient thing : it possessed a quality which was a guarantee of its permanence, for it belonged to the region where God and man could truly meet ; it belonged to the realm which was spiritual and eternal ; it was the kingdom of God, and therefore it was abiding ; it was a kingdom which was spiritual, and which could therefore be set up in the hearts of men.

¹ Professor H. B. Swete, *Studies in the Teaching of our Lord*, p. 18. London, 1903.

² See *Ibid.*, p. 161 ; Deissmann, *Words of Jesus*, p. 91.

This spiritual and eternal kingdom could never be conceived of as a kingdom which might be yesterday and might cease to be to-morrow; it possessed the quality which made it independent of time, and hence it is that, as has been pointed out, the eschatological tone of earlier teachers falls into the background in our Lord's teaching.¹ The kingdom of God, which was eternal and spiritual, could not be regarded as merely a future kingdom. And yet Christ taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." He did so, for the realization of what is eternal and spiritual must in the order of human experience be a matter of growth and development; and growth is the coming up to what is, and development is the realization of an order which is; the order is not made by the development; the development is the manifestation of the order. Man does not make the kingdom of God, but man can realize it. So Christ, indeed, taught men to pray that the kingdom of God might come; but to Him it was existent, operative, eternal. And as such also He set it before men. The processes of nature, which went ceaselessly

¹ Swete, p. 23.

forward, were like the kingdom of God. Man might sleep and wake night and day, but the seed would grow. Man did not make the kingdom of Nature, but he might slumber and fail to note its operative force. Man did not make the kingdom of God, and yet man might fail to realize the splendid sweep and unfailing force of the spiritual order. So Christ spoke of a kingdom which to Him was the only true kingdom. He spoke of it as orderly, powerful, and near to every man. It was as real as the earth-order which gave to them the harvest; it was much nearer, indeed, to every man, for the kingdom of God was within.

This kingdom might be said to have its laws, as it most certainly had its Sovereign; and accordingly we ought to expect to find Christ setting forth before men some at least of those principles in which the spiritual order is expressed to men.

The originality of Christ's teaching has been challenged. Men have exercised their learning and ingenuity in endeavouring to find parallels between the sayings of our Lord and the earlier or contemporary utterances of other teachers; but there is something to my mind

very puerile and shallow in the attempt to disparage the originality of the unquestionably great. It is usually the task of small and prosaic minds, to whom the conception of originality seems to be confused with that of the smart ability to coin phrases or to invent dramatic situations ; whereas originality is a greater thing than these cheap gifts. The accusation of plagiarism has been levelled against poets of the first rank, and it is unquestionably true that we can find parallels of phrase between the greatest poets and earlier writers, just as we can convict Shakespeare of borrowing the fundamental story of his plays from the chronicler. But it is with the truly great teacher and poet as it is with the sculptor and the painter. They draw their materials from the most ready and most fitting quarters. The genius of the painter is not seen in the colours he uses, but in the way in which he uses them. The originality of the sculptor does not lie in the marble, but in the spirit with which he invests the marble which he handles. Marble is the common medium of expression of the good sculptor and the bad ; to use this medium implies neither originality nor its lack. Similarly, to use the old chron-

icle, to seize upon existing material, neither makes nor mars the originality of the poet. His greatness is seen in the greatness with which he handles his theme, and the magic skill with which he uses his material. His greatness lies in the all-pervading spirit with which he invests his work.

Hence, to show parallels of phrase or thought between the sayings of Christ and sayings collected from other sources does not touch the question of his greatness or his originality. His greatness as a teacher lies in the spirit which He imparted to all He said; and whether He was coining some new and pregnant saying, or whether He was giving his sanction to some ancient or current speech, his originality is to be sought in the underlying conception, in the fundamental principles, which illumine each passing saying. Measured in this way, the teaching of Christ is radically different from that of his contemporaries. Their minds were set upon things as they saw them; their horizon was bounded by the fortunes of Israel and the ideas of current hope; there was no flavour of the eternal; there was little of the spiritual. But Christ saw the kingdom of God which was here and now,

and which yet was the eternal kingdom. He lived in the realization of the changeless spiritual order. He dreamed of no material triumph wrought by a sudden divine interposition on behalf of Israel, such as the popular Apocalyptic seers described. He looked for the recognition of that kingdom of his Father, which always is, and which only is "to come" because men fail to recognize it, and which, though it is eternal, is yet within the hearts of the meek and the lowly.

Christ's teaching, then, differed in radical genius from the teaching of his day. He was indebted neither to Pharisee nor to Essene for the spirit which expressed itself in what He taught. He often struck notes familiar to the ears of those who heard Him, but the dominant tone, the keynote of his teaching, was not that of the teaching of his day; for He taught them spiritual principles which needed no support of pedantic precedent, but carried a clear and persuasive authority with them.

What were these principles? It will not be possible to enter exhaustively into these. It will be enough to select one or two, which careful study will show to be constant and recurring principles in his teaching.

No one ever promulgated so clearly the doctrine of faith in goodness. No one ever lived so consistently in the confidence of this truth. He taught it, but to say He taught it does not express half strongly enough what I mean. It is nearer the mark to say that it was to Him so great, so obvious, so natural a truth, that it was perpetually present in his teaching; it was so completely a part of his own life that it lay at the back of all his teaching. Sometimes He expressed the truth directly: Men were to do good that they might prove themselves the children of Him whose goodness was wide and impartial, who sent his rain on the evil and on the good. His disciples might pray with confidence and assume God's readiness to do good by recalling their own tenderness to their children. "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" He thus taught explicitly faith in goodness, but more often this idea of overruling goodness was taken for granted. Indeed, it was incomprehensible to Him that men did not see the absolute necessity and the inviolability of

right. "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"

But his confidence in the changeless goodness which ruled all was seen in his life as well as in his teaching. So sure was He that goodness ruled, that it was out of the question that He should employ any adventitious aids to secure the success of his mission. Goodness was weapon enough in the hand of any reformer. This is the lesson of the Temptation. Whatever conditions may arise, there needs no other power than goodness itself to find the way to victory. Stones need not be turned into bread; wonders need not awaken attention when goodness can win the heart; no vantage-ground of conquest is required when goodness suffices to win the kingdoms of the world.

What He was at the beginning of his ministry, He was at the end. He would have no other power to help Him. Was not goodness a divine power in itself? If help were needed, legions of angels would come from his Father; but such help was not needed because goodness would achieve its own victory, and so God's will — the Scripture as He expressed it — would be fulfilled.

He went about doing good, and it was not only joy to Him, but it was the very sustenance of his soul; for in doing good He was working out the purpose of Him who was good; so He found it his meat and drink to do the Father's will.

Thus He lived, as He taught, an unflinching belief in goodness. He refused any worldly aid, for He knew that goodness was not only beautiful but strong; it was an all-victorious power, sufficient in itself, for the universe was governed by goodness.

Did ever any character appear in history which rested so simply and so completely upon goodness as a power? Not certainly Mohammed, calling to his aid the swords of the faithful. Not Buddha, retreating from the battle of life because goodness was too weak to win the field. None of his followers, however true and beautiful their lives have been, have lived so completely or so calmly confident in the power of goodness.

Orthodoxy too often has been traitorous to the Master's faith when she has grasped the battle-axe or confronted error with the scaffold and the flame.

As we look back and fully estimate the life

and character of Christ, it is this quality of faith in goodness which strikes us as significant and emphatic. We see that faith in goodness was the very essence of his victory; He believed in goodness; He believed so completely in it that He was ready to encounter every peril; He was so wholly in moral sympathy with goodness that He could not detach himself from it, or seek any other aid than goodness, even though death was the penalty of his confidence.

He went to the cross with unshaken faith in goodness, without misgiving as to its ultimate victory somewhere and somewhen. Failure, or at least such a collapse as He knew all the world of his time would reckon to be failure, He was ready to encounter rather than lower his flag or do aught which would seem to admit that goodness was less than all-powerful. Though all others lost heart, and deemed that goodness or the cause of God had failed, He would not forego his faith, and even upon the cross would cling to and die in the confidence that good in the end could know no failure.

“The brave and good who serve
A worthy cause can only one way fail;
By perishing therein. Is it to fail?”

No: every great or good man's death is a step
Firm set towards the end, the end of being;
The good of all and love of God."

When Philip James Bailey wrote these lines, he had the witness of more than eighteen Christian centuries; but could he have written them, or have felt the noble confidence in good and good triumphant which they breathe, had not Christ lived and worked and died never losing faith in goodness, because He knew, as none other knew, the changeless goodness of God?

The supremacy of eternal goodness, then, was one principle taught by Christ. This leads to another; for when we realize how this inevitable prevalence of goodness was like a major premise in the mind of Christ and the natural axiom of his conduct, do we not realize that the supreme test of character consists in the possession of a spirit which is worshipful towards goodness? The difference between man and man, according to Christ, is not to be found in any external advantages or any intellectual gifts, but just in their respective attitudes towards goodness. It is not the difference between outward conformity and otherwise with certain conventional moral

standards; it is the relation of the soul towards goodness itself.

Moral sympathy with goodness is, according to Christ, the test of man. He did not measure man by his possessions or attainments, by his correctness in ceremonial observance, or even by his actions apart from their inner motive or the moral sympathy which inspired them.

A man's value was not determined by his riches. Christ's teaching was far removed from the fatal mis-suggestion of values which is found in the question so often asked concerning a rich man, "What is he worth?" The monetary possessions of a man were merely accidents in the eyes of Christ; they added no whit to his worth. A man's life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses. Neither, in Christ's estimate, ought a man's value to be measured by the outward conformity of his life to certain conventional standards; for men might, for a pretence, make long prayers, and might be punctual in almsgiving, without being in any true sense good men. Christ indeed made actions a test of life: "By their fruits ye shall know them;" but as He did so, He related these

actions to the moral dispositions from which they sprang. It was not the bare external act which gave evidence of goodness, but it was the act which sprang from an honest and good heart which was the really good action. In other words, Christ sought within for the measure of the value of life. Actions which were without any inward moral preference for right over wrong were not worthy actions. The good deed must be the expression of a soul which was acting in harmony with good. Thus Christ, in short, made moral sympathy with good the *sine qua non* of good deeds. In his view, the happiness of life was found in the possession of a moral sympathy in harmony with the highest good. He teaches this principle in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the pure in heart, the meek, the peacemakers, they that hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matt. v. 1-10). The benediction of life, in short, belongs to those whose souls are in moral sympathy with good.

It thus appears that Christ regarded inward moral sympathy as a standard of a man's worth. He will not ask what religious duties a man has fulfilled, any more than He will

ask what his social position is; but He will ask, and most emphatically ask, in what direction have a man's moral sympathies gone? He may have been an obscure man, capable of achieving very little, but if his moral sympathies have been such that his heart has throbbed in harmony with a great and good cause, has been capable of honest indignation against wrong, of earnest desire for the victory of right, of simple pity for sorrow and weakness, of hunger for the good, then no matter what his lot has been, or how little known or noticed his actions, that is a man of worth,—a man of the kingdom. In one saying, the full significance of which is often overlooked, Christ gives very clear expression to this principle; it is the passage in which He makes what we may call his great declaration of partnership in final rewards. This is the statement: "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward." The meaning is plain; the force of the statement lies in the conditional clauses "in the name of a prophet," "in the name of a right-

eous man." The extension of hospitality supposed must in each case be accompanied by a moral sympathy with the aims of the prophet or the righteous man. The humblest individual who, having no gifts of prophetic power, yet responds in heart to the prophet's aim, and who, by doing what he can to ease the prophet's path or to help his work, shows that he has genuine moral sympathy with the prophet, will share a prophet's reward. Those who are one in moral sympathy will be one in reward. The principle is clear and intelligible. There is no participation in the final triumphs of good unless there has been a moral sympathy with the good. It is not the chief actor in any movement for right who will alone be rewarded. Every humble servant, every ardent sympathizer, every man whose heart rang true and who did his best will enter into possession of the reward.

Here again we have Christ's enunciation of the principle of moral sympathy. And if we need more, we have only to remind ourselves of that great utterance in which He pictures the last scene in which man is discriminated from man, and the final worth of human lives is declared (Matt. xxv. 34-46). Who are those

who are placed on the right hand in that day of judgment? And the answer is, those whose lives were marked by the active expression of moral sympathy with the law of kindness. Who are those placed on the judge's left hand? Those whose hearts were not stirred by sympathy with the hunger, sorrow, and misery of those around them. Christ measures man by the quality of his moral sympathy. We may note in passing that we have here an illustration of the way in which Christian dogma may be restated through the medium of Christ's teaching, for in this principle of moral sympathy we have the germ of what afterwards became the doctrine of justification. In God's sight actions do not righten a man with God; man can only enter into a position of reconciliation by entering into moral sympathy with the divine order. When the soul is stirred by the faint but sincere desire of this moral sympathy with the Father's will, the longing for right and for righteousness, its feeblest stirrings are understood; its trust in God is awakened; its sympathies are rightened; its moral rightening has begun; it relies no longer on itself, but on God, the author of the righteous order after which it yearns; *Fides est*

fiducia, as the greatest of the reformers taught. The moral sympathies once awake, the moral activities will follow. Sanctification will follow that faith of moral sympathy which, according to Christ, brought man into true fellowship with the kingdom and victory of good.

Thus Christ's measure of man lay in the quality of man's moral sympathy.

To this, however, it may be objected that there is one striking exception, namely, his attitude toward the publican and the sinner. Does his attitude here, it will be asked, show that He measures man by a quality of moral sympathy with goodness? Were these, the open violators of moral order, to be credited with a clear sympathy with goodness?

We may admit that at first sight this seems to constitute an exception to the rule or principle we have been considering. But on a closer study it will be found to be no real exception, but rather a confirmation of the principle; a life might be marked by great and glaring acts of misconduct, in which customary standards might have been so grossly ignored that the man might have fallen under social censure or even social ostracism,

and yet the capacity of moral response to goodness might be undestroyed.

In his experience Christ found that the power of moral response was often stronger and fresher in the sinner than in the faultless conventionalist, who deemed himself holy above his fellows. "The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you," was his language to the self-satisfied and self-deceiving Pharisees.

In his method of dealing with the Pharisee on the one side and the publican and sinner on the other, Christ accepts the principle of inward moral sympathy with goodness; by responsiveness to the appeal of higher ideals the sinner discloses a fundamental quality of character more wholesome than the Pharisaic temper. Christ said that He judged no man, and in the sense in which He meant it this is profoundly true, since the only judgment which is finally effective is self-judgment. The presence or appeal of goodness is in fact the introduction of a test whether this power of self-judgment is effective; and till it has been awakened into effectiveness, man is far from the kingdom of Heaven. So Christ spoke to the Pharisees, "Ye are they that justify

yourselves in the sight of men ; but God knoweth your hearts : for that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God ” (Luke xvi. 15, R. V.). In passages such as these we recognize the yearning with which Christ was filled to call forth the capacity of self-judgment according to the standards of simple goodness and not of social opinion.

He believed that this moral responsiveness would be forthcoming even among the weak and erring. Only long-indulged selfishness could deaden its power. This is the position taken by the late Professor T. H. Green, who very truly wrote that however incompletely moral power may be actualized in a man, “ he in a sense feels the possibilities, unless selfish interests have closed the avenues of his heart, through sympathy with the higher life of society about him.”¹ In other words, the manifestation of higher ideals constitutes an appeal to moral capacity, and this moral capacity may receive more deadly injury through the egotism, conceit, and self-confidence engendered by a pharisaic compliance with conventional standards, which operate as ethical narcotics,

¹ *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 222, 223. London, 1888.

not as ethical stimuli, than through glaring moral failures which are clearly recognized as wrong. The publican and harlot may enter the kingdom before the Pharisee.

Thus Christ consistently kept to his measure of men by the quality of their moral sympathy. He did not measure by the outward life, though He insisted on practical fruit in the life; He measured by the singleness and sincerity of the heart; the heart must be right, or all else was wrong.

This is a reasonable measure of life. Man, like all other beings, can only find happiness by being in harmony with his environment. The real question is, What is man's true environment? To the materialist, the true environment is physical nature; to the man to whom the ethical and spiritual realms are realities, man's true environment is the eternal and righteous order: only when he is brought into harmony with this order can man reach happiness, and only when he is in true heart sympathy with righteousness is he in harmony with that order. If, as Christ taught, goodness rules, then to be in harmony with his environment man must be in harmony with the regnant goodness of the universe. This

is Christ's teaching, Be good, because goodness is all around you, and in being so you will find blessedness.

We have thus touched on great principles laid down by Christ: but we have one further question to ask, Does Christ link these principles with some ruling thought which gives them coherence? Our answer must be that He does, and that in doing so He gives us the golden key of life, the key which opens the gate of life towards heaven and towards earth, towards God and towards man. He lays down one dominant principle from which all these minor principles flow. This dominant principle is love. His faith in the goodness which rules everywhere is derived from his faith in the love which governs all things. Behind all the facts and phenomena we encounter there stands the everlasting Love, which does good and sends sunshine and rain upon all with ungrudging hand. If the goodness which rules all things is thus a goodness born of love, goodness in man must be parallel to it, and must arise from the heart which has learned true love.

Further, this love which rules everywhere and shows itself in goodness is a love which

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springs from a recognized and real relationship between God and man. Love in the universe is not an accidental or arbitrary thing; it is the expression of a tie or bond in the nature of things. The love which rules all is a love which can be best expressed by the relationship between Father and Son. Christ's trust in goodness was the trust which arises from the love expressed in relationship, and He enjoined on his hearers a like childlike trust; they might trust in the love, because they might look to God as to a Father.

In the realization of the relationship the circle of man's life is completed. Love is the bond between God and man; love is the bond between man and man; and these bonds are not departures from nature but fulfilments of it, for they spring from a relationship which was original. Man may pray "Our Father," and man will seek to do good and kind things to his fellow men that he may be like to his Father in heaven, who gives ungrudgingly and unstintingly to all. In realizing that the relationships between God and man and between man and man are original relationships, relationships of nature, not of invention, we can perceive how naturally and necessarily

love is the essential medium of all life, and we can understand in what a wide and inevitable sense Christ declared that the first and great commandment was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and that the second was its natural and necessary counterpart, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

IV

CHRIST THE LAW OF THE SOUL

CHRIST supplies the ethical ideal for man. He expresses in himself the standard of human conduct. He shows what man owes to his fellow man. He has become the conscience of humanity. But He supplies also the mystical ideal. He exhibits in himself the perfect harmony which ought to subsist between man and God. The harmony of his soul and Heaven is unbroken. Further, Jesus Christ himself lays down a principle of life which both secures righteous dealing between man and man and inspires spiritual harmony between the soul and God. The principle which gives this security and inspiration is a simple one; it is love, based upon the consciousness of relationship. The duty to man is secured wherever love is. Love also is the inspiration of sympathetic feeling between God and man. Love makes harmony between God and man because God is love; and this love is based upon a true relationship because God is the Father of men. It

is in view of this principle that we recognize the significance of the commandment which Christ declared to be the first and great commandment. If the relationship between God and man be that of Father and child, the first, the inevitably first commandment must be that of love; for only in love is the relationship realized and understood. The second commandment is the obvious outcome of the first. The relationship of Father to children involves a relationship of brotherhood, and this relationship again is only interpreted by love.

It is clear, then, that Christ is an ethical and mystical pattern to us, and an interpreter of some fundamental principles of our spiritual being. But He is more; He holds a relationship towards us more intimate and more significant than that of pattern and interpreter. He is not merely a moral ideal, not merely a manifestation of perfect harmony with God; He is that law of the soul apart from which man cannot reach his full growth or achieve the true completeness of his being. He is that law, outside which man's life must be accounted failure; or, to use the familiar word of Christendom, He is the law without the application of which to life man is "lost." If

there is truth in this statement, we can understand the earnestness with which the apostles insist on the necessity of the Christ to man, declaring that his name is the only name under heaven "whereby we must be saved." This language has sounded exclusive and intolerant in the ears of many, and exclusive and intolerant it would be, and indeed has been, when divorced from its true ethical significance; but when read and understood in its true spiritual sense, it becomes the utterance of a noble and inevitable truth to which the soul of man, unless disturbed by vain egotism, naturally responds. In expressing my belief that Christ is the law of the soul, I reach the very heart of our subject, and I can only crave a patient hearing.

First, there is such a thing as a law of the soul.

At the outset let us understand the words we use. What is meant by this word, a law of the soul? The word *law*, I freely admit, is ambiguous. In an earlier lecture I deprecated the use of ambiguous words on the ground that they have inevitably led to misunderstanding, and have been prolific in the production of heresies and impostures. Law is a word so

frequently used, and used in so loose a sense, that we need to remember Dr. Alexander Hill's caution, that the misuse of the word law has wrought mischief. On the lips of some it has been conjured with in such a fashion that we perceive that an obstinate and unintelligent traditionalism may be employed in the name of science as well as in that of theology. The magic of a word is great, and when used with imposing spells, it may succeed in putting reason to sleep. Law has been used as though it were in itself a power, or force, that is, as if it possessed a subtle capacity for enforcing results. But law has no force in itself; it is only the expression of a relationship, or for the grouping of facts according to some common features. In some cases it expresses not much more than a hypothetical contingency; we sometimes use it in a more forceful sense, but this is the case only when we are in a position to take for granted that certain conditions exist, and that therefore the connection between cause and effect is in operative activity. Strictly, law is only the expression of a common relationship,—a docket, as Dr. Alexander Hill has said. We might illustrate by saying that a law is a kind of portfolio for classified

facts. It is only, then, with the view of showing the existence of certain common features of soul growth that I call Christ the law of the soul; I mean that in Him we find expression given to features which recur in the development of our higher nature.

With this meaning of law in mind, let me recall an admitted tendency in organic life. There is, we are told, a tendency in all organic life to build itself up according to a certain fixed or inherited type. It is needless to labour the proof of this tendency; it is familiar to all. It shows itself in nature, when the seed brings forth fruit after its kind. We acknowledge it when we acquiesce in the statement that men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. We express the same principle when we say that a man has made his own bed, and must lie on it. It is the principle that once we start growth, the unseen living force will bring forth fruit resembling the seed sown; it will not change its nature, or bring forth a different seed, because the seed once sown must build itself up according to its type. Religion expresses the same principle in familiar words, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and we hear

it given utterance in the question addressed to the husbandman in the parable, "Didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares?" When we say that "like follows like," we express our belief that all things tend to build themselves up according to some fixed type. Each organism grows according to its own method. The common principle that like follows like does not mean that the methods of growth are identical in all realms. Where wheat is sown, wheat will spring up, and where tares are sown, tares will spring up; where birds nest, there the birdlets will be. The principle of resemblance to what went before is common, but the way in which the corn grows is not the way in which the birds grow. As we climb higher in nature's realm, we find changing forms, but they are seeking their type. Everywhere we find living things, according to their order, following out the tendency to build themselves up so as to express some type. The type does not always show itself beforehand; new types are brought forth from time to time; the type towards which the organism grows is not always in the past, for higher types may succeed lower. Life is not always on a dead level; it may de-

generate or revert to type, but it may also reach forward to types and forms in advance of those which went before. If, then, any one were to say that there is a type after which man can strive, and according to which man ought to be building himself, he would not be stating something which was inconceivable. In the thought of an apostle this idea was a kind of natural ambition. He regarded Christ as the type according to which all men were intended to be fashioned; for the realization of this he laboured, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

There is nothing inconceivable in this, and the fact that men have accepted Christ as the exemplar, the type, the pattern man, is quite in harmony with the apostle's aspiration. That there was a pattern after which we should strive was stated by our Lord. His ideal was, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." In his view, man was no idle or inconsequent product of nature; there was a goal set before humanity; men were the children of the divine Father, and therefore there was a type towards which men were expected to grow, and after this pattern man should strive to build himself up.

But this pattern was not simply to be regarded as a pattern to be copied by sheer force of will. It was a pattern after which men indeed might aspire, for men, like all living things, were equipped with a force which could be utilized to this end. Let us notice this force.

It is the force which everywhere seems to be demanding self-expression. Give any living thing the chance, and it will seek to express itself. It comes into the world perhaps as a tiny seed, but it acts as though it were possessed of a soul which is bound by a necessity of its existence to express itself. As the Eastern would say, here is *Tanhâ*, or fatal desire in all created things. Of its fatality I may speak later; now we are only thinking of the strong tendency towards self-expression. If we could endow the seed with sentiency as well as life, we might picture its agony when placed in an environment which seemed hostile to its self-expression. If it were gifted with imagination, it would see visions of what it might be and of what it was meant to be. It would see the glorious harvest gold, the ear nobly ripe and proudly drooping, ready to be gathered for some worthy use, and it would feel a keen an-

guish and resentment against the hard and churlish soil which refused to the struggling life within its bosom the needed nurture; it would yearn for the warmth and the moisture wherewith it might quicken and expand, and, meeting only with dryness and chill, it would shrivel into impotence as it saw its hope of self-expression wholly and fatally pass away.

The parable has been realized a thousand times in history. Hints of it may be met with in many a home. All living things tend towards self-expression, and the delay of opportunity or the presence of real or fancied hindrances may account for many of those features of adolescent life which we are wont to judge harshly.

Youth is — shall we admit it? — very often trying and disagreeable in manner. Have we not all criticised the conceit and self-confidence of the young? Is there not a period in which the lad barely out of his teens offends us with his egotism and vanity? He writes all things with a capital I; he is restless, intolerant, overbearing. But let us not read these symptoms wrongly. This is the sign of the dawning capacity for self-expression. The nursery and the playthings delight no

more; the childish things are put away; the lad feels that he is called to give expression to the powers and capacities which can deal with greater things than toys. His soul is crying with Gareth, —

“Man am I grown, a man’s work must I do.”

Youth in its restlessness bears witness to the presence of this imperious need for self-expression. The young man seeks a place, a platform, a vocation; the great world seems to call him; the power within urges him; life and the world are given as opportunities for self-expression. The vocation found, the opportunity to live his own life given, we mark the happy change: the egotism which offended us disappears; the self-insistent manner, which we called conceit, gives place to a joyous gentleness. “He is vain and egotistic” was the verdict pronounced in an Oxford common room concerning one of the junior fellows of the college. “No,” said a wiser heart, “not so. He has capacities and gifts, and he has not yet found the chance for their use; let him meet with some success, and his disagreeable manner will disappear.” The success came, and the judgment of the kindlier wisdom was shown to

be right. Unexpressed power breeds restlessness and a seeming arrogance ; apparent egotism often means only thwarted ability. The passion for self-expression is strong, and pain and discontent burn in the soul which has not yet found its opportunity of self-expression.

And is not all art the witness of this passionate desire ? Thought in the artist's soul cries for expression. Be it canvas or marble, the artist longs to make the material of his craft the vehicle of expressing his thought. He sees the type to which he wishes stone or colour to grow. The strength of this desire for self-expression is seen in every gallery of the world ; it is heard in the lament which has gone up from poet and painter, from sculptor and craftsman, that art is long and time is fleeting, that the material is deaf to the artist's command ; it finds its climax in realizing that the noblest ideas transcend and defy the power of expression. Life is in the world of art and song a series of attempts to find the truest and highest self-expression. The failure is frequent, or, as Sir Joshua Reynolds said, " The idea in the mind of the painter is that which never has been, and never will be, expressed in art."

Here, then, we see a great and resistless human tendency struggling with difficulty. It is not art alone that complains that the desire for self-expression seems destined to go unrealized. Voices of men in all ages have been heard crying, "Vanity of vanities! all is vanity!" In vain, whether in fields of action or fields of art, whether in realms of thought or emotion, men have striven for that self-realization or self-expression which seems always just beyond their grasp. The restlessness and dissatisfaction of life, of which we hear so much, may be cited by moralists as showing the unsatisfactoriness of the things seen; but does it not witness to the inwrought tendency, the inevitable thirst, to find adequate self-expression? Does it not mean the wish to reach that form of self-realization which will be independent of time and worthy of man's nature? Acknowledging this tendency in man, do we not read the significance of the religious instinct? In religion man, who must seek self-expression, seeks that self-expression in terms of the eternal. As he seeks in religion to establish relationship with the divine, so also, as far as the realization of himself is concerned, in religion he seeks to express himself in the

eternal. Man, made to seek self-expression, can find it adequately only in that which is greater than himself. He can find himself only in Him who made him. So we come back to St. Augustine's often-quoted words, "Thou hast made us for thyself, and we cannot rest till we rest in Thee." Or to express the same thought in harmony with what I have been saying, "Thou hast made us for thyself, and we cannot find our true selves, express ourselves, or fulfil our nature, save in Thee."

We now reach the condition of things out of which spring certain varieties in religion. The great yearning for self-expression exists, but it is constantly exposed to failure; it seems to be reaching after a shadow, for difficulties meet it on all sides. When man realizes this conflict or contradiction in life, he is on the eve of the discovery of another law of his nature or of the world in which his lot is cast. The desire to express self reveals the need of sacrificing self; in his very effort to realize self, he finds himself confronted by a law of failure and death, which if he understands rightly he will find to be the expression of a higher law of his being, namely, the law of growth. One or two examples will make this clear.

Here is a lad who shows precocious ability; his amateur work is the wonder of his home and the envy of his neighbours. The experienced artist sees his work, and while recognizing its ability, notes its crudeness and lack of discipline. The lad is worth training. Such is his judgment on the village genius. Now it is open to such a lad to refuse or accept the tedious discipline of the schools. If he refuse, he can win the open-mouthed admiration and ignorant applause of his fellow villagers; he may even win a bourgeois fame. But if he accept the yoke of discipline, he is putting his genius to the test; he is encountering a risk. The long training may prove too much for his talents; it may crush out originality, or it may, by endowing him with technical skill, liberate his talents and bestow upon him that ease of self-expression which will set him in the front rank of his craft. The yoke of discipline becomes the test of his genius; it is a life or death trial to him. If his genius be real and vital, it will survive and become the stronger through the yoke; if it be fictitious, it will fail. In other words, to reach the highest power of self-expression, the young aspirant must be ready to un-

learn much, to suppress many idiosyncrasies which were mistaken by friends, perhaps by himself, for evidences of genius ; he must surrender much that he may reach the full freedom of his powers ; he must die that he may find his true life. The very urgency with which he essays to express himself brings him to the discovery that if he would express himself fully, nobly, and adequately, he must be prepared with some self-surrender. Here we have but one example of the ancient wisdom, which said that the first step towards knowledge was to unlearn what was nought. Here we have the indication of that law which is persistent and continuous in human life, namely, that it is only through self-suppression that we gain the full power of self-expression. Success may be obtained without self-surrender or submission to the yoke, but it will be success in the lower plane. Success of the higher order can only be won by the way of self-surrender. This is the law of all true development and of all high achievement. The presence or the absence of this law differentiates between the success of egotism and the success of the emancipated self, between the worthless and the worthy fame, between the worldly and the unworldly religion.

It is a law of achievement. It not only declares itself in the way in which the discipline of the schools, as we have seen, may test the budding artist: it discloses itself in the way in which genius has to learn from its own experience the lesson of self-sacrifice.

The poet, the sculptor, the painter, must each — as Keats expressed it — allow his genius to work out its own salvation in him. The loftier gift mingles with the lowly conditions. The young genius is self-conscious, vain, full of irritating and hindering conceits, yet he is true in one thing, — he is true to the stirrings of the Muse or gift. He has a gift of self-discernment in this matter, but he has as yet power of self-expression far from perfect, for conceit hinders the free exercise of his gift; he must die to himself; his art must be all-absorbing; he must be heedless of fame and blame, before the laurel can fall upon his brow. He who would sacrifice to the Muses must sacrifice himself. The seed of the lofty gift works in him, and the lower self is brought to sacrifice. He loses himself to find himself. An interesting writer, now dead, once set himself the task of reducing to a science the various canons of criticism. He wrote two fascinating

volumes, richly dight with illustrations, joyous, pregnant, and inconclusive; but he saw and he declared that the spiritual laws had their counterpart in literature. Here there was a self-surrender, a self-disownment; here there was a justification by faith; here a saving doctrine of self-abandonment before true expression could be reached.

The discoverer, no less than the poet, can illustrate this law; for what is the history of discovery, if it be not a conviction at first which led some man to believe that he could from himself evolve a system by which the Cosmos could be explained? But all was failure, for it was theory, self-born; self-abandonment had to be learned. Till men began, like children, to sit at Nature's feet, and cry, "O great mother, teach thou us, for by ourselves we have only blundered," they tumbled about amid senseless and brilliantly impossible guesses. The inductive method is self-disownment, for it is the docile surrender of the pride which guesses in exchange for the humility which learns. When once this is reached, Nature opens wide her doors, and man gains the power of expressing truth because he has gained the power of thinking, as Galileo said, the thoughts of God.

Man never finds his place truly and fully in the world till he has stooped to bear the yoke of self-sacrifice.

We shall not be surprised to find that this is the law of religious progress. When we examine the religions of men, we find that they can be classified into those which are epicurean, those which are ascetic, and those which are strong enough to combine the double law of human development. The epicurean religions have always been fashionable. They are the religions which promise men happiness or salvation without the necessity of self-sacrifice. The conditions of religious life are conveniently lowered to suit the weakness or the cowardice of humanity ; there is no cross in these. There are others of a sterner order ; they accept the yoke of sacrifice, but they accept it in such a severe form that they kill the very capacity for self-expression. The ascetic religion makes war not only upon the selfish passions of man, but upon man's real nature. The Buddhist desires to get rid of every trace of the longing for self-expression, just as the Pillar Saint thought in reducing every vital power to purify the spiritual nature. The ascetic religion, like the yoke of pedantic

educational training, kills the very capacity which needs to be developed. The epicurean religion satisfies the capacity for self-expression in the lower planes, but gives it no scope for finding its life in the higher. The strong and the worthy religion enables its worshippers to accept the yoke of self-sacrifice and yet preserve the true self, to give to man the power of expressing himself, not in the lower but in the highest ranges of life. Thus, the law of the soul appears to me to be this: the highest and the fullest self-expression can be reached only through self-sacrifice. Man must express himself, and he must be himself when he does so. The sacred "I," the true originality, the individuality which we must all reverence,—these must be preserved, and be able to express themselves without the weakness of egotism or the unworthiness of selfishness. Man must find that self which is without selfishness. But this he can find only through the gateway of self-sacrifice. This is the law which has found expression in the interpretation which the higher thinkers of modern Japan have given to Nirvana when they describe it to be the state of selfhood divorced from selfishness. This is the law to which Christ

gave expression nearly two thousand years ago when He said, "He that loveth his life shall lose it." This is the law of "siege perilous," in which the young Galahads of life rejoice who are ready to leap into the seat where death itself is enthroned and cry, "If I lose myself, I find myself!"

But this principle which now we begin to recognize as a far-reaching law of human development is the principle which is expressed in Jesus Christ. It is not simply a principle which He taught, but it is one to which He gave unique, vivid, and profound expression, insomuch that He himself is the law, of which this principle is only a pale statement. He exhibits in himself the purpose, as well as the principle, of human life.

This is evident; for the incidents of Christ's life have become expressive of the developing stages of the life of Christian experience, or, as we may state it, expressive of man's true and normal life as God meant it to be. For what do we find? The incidents of Christ's life are felt to convey fundamental and permanent principles of spiritual life: his birth, his death, his resurrection have become spiritualized. But this is quite an inadequate if not a mislead-

ing word; it is not so much that the facts have become spiritualized, as that it has been realized universally that the facts convey the true spiritual law of human life.

Is Christ born? There is a new man, a living Christ, to be formed in every man. Does Christ die? There is an old nature which must die in us if our true nature is to express itself. Does Christ rise? We must rise from the death of sin into the life of righteousness. Does Christ ascend? Our thoughts should dwell in those regions which are high above the selfish struggles and mean ambitions of earth.

No reader of the New Testament can fail to see how the whole cycle of Christ's life is spoken of as reproduced in the Christian. Christ's life is unique, but it is also typical; it must have its counterpart in us.

The life of Christ becomes a spiritual symbolism; the sacraments of Christ reflect the idea. The thought passes into the current language of Christendom. It finds expression in the prayers of the Church. If Christmas Day is reached, we are bidden to look, not merely to the miracle of nineteen hundred years ago, but to the inner spiritual marvel

of human regeneration. "Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit." If New Year's Day bids us remember Him who was circumcised and obedient to the law for man, we are also reminded that there is a circumcision of the spirit, — a mortifying of carnal and worldly lusts. If we are brought to the threshold of Holy Week, it is that we may pray that the like ready spirit of lowly service may be ours, — that we may follow the example of his patience. If we reach the day of calm interlude between the agony of the Cross and the triumph over the grave, we are again reminded that our corrupt afflictions must be mortified, and that there is a deep spiritual sense in which we should be buried with Him. So also Easter brings us not only the story of victory, but the lesson of the risen and emancipated life which is to be manifested by turning good desires into practice. Good desires are to be allowed to work themselves out into good effects. If Ascension-tide comes, it is not only that we may think of Christ at the right hand of God, but that we may also in heart and mind thither ascend and with Him con-

tinually dwell ; it is that we may be exalted unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before.

Thus the leading features of Christ's life become transfigured into types of human experience, and this is done by the consensus of the whole of Christendom. It is not merely the imaginative or allegorical idea of one writer, but it is the thought which, deliberately expressed by St. Paul, has been incorporated into the speech of many ; it has created a phraseology for Christendom. And perhaps most significant of all, it appears, as we have seen, in the devotional utterances of Christian souls. I say most significant because in these utterances the experiences of the soul find free expression, and the inward nature most frankly reveals itself. The soul finds in the facts of Christ's life a fitting expression of its own law of growth. The dawn of the higher is followed by conflict ; the conflict ends in the death of the lower ; the death of the lower means the triumph of the true self, — which is no longer "self," but Christ.

Thus in a profound and unequivocal sense Christ may truly be said to be the law of the soul ; in Him is expressed that constant prin-

ciple which is requisite for the full and final development of the spiritual nature of man.

This principle, so set forth, throws a clear light upon one perplexing question of life. It bears a relation to the fascinating philosophy of dualism. The contradictions of life lead to dualism : darkness is real, light is real ; joy is real, sorrow is real ; death is real, life is real ; cloud and sunshine succeed one another ; day and night alternately come ; suffering is blent with aspiration after perfect things. We feel the fascination of the dualistic explanation of these things, yet for a moment let us turn to the life of Christ. In no other life was there more reason for the expression of dualism. The shadows are of the darkest, the light is of the brightest, yet in no single hint or casual word do we meet a suggestion of dualism ; on the contrary, the sustained and joyous confidence of Christ is the feature which strikes us. His life is cast between light and shade, but his soul dwells in unbroken peace. In other lives darkness and light seem to be irreconcilable ; they are like two planes which never meet. In Christ these planes seem to intersect ; the line of his life appears to belong equally and har-

moniously to both; sorrow is there, but it is swallowed up in joy. Now let us make a supposition: let us suppose that this law of progress through suffering — this law of the Cross as the symbol of spiritual development — is true, should we not then possess a reconciling principle when the question is asked whether the God of Nature is the God of the human conscience? Men have often asked this question. The God whom their consciences accept does not seem to be the God of that Nature which is red in tooth and claw. Yet suppose that the Cross is the symbol of the world's progress; suppose that it is only through suffering that its supremest evolution can take place; suppose that every step from the lower to the higher is a step through the gateway of pain and death; suppose that the path to the realization of a life inspired by love is and must be a path of suffering and self-sacrifice; suppose that these moral and spiritual ideals which the conscience acknowledges can be realized only through pain and self-surrender; suppose that only thus can man enter into his spiritual inheritance, — then all reason for dualism ceases, then the conviction of the unity of

Nature is no longer threatened by contradiction. We may not be able to reconcile all the details in which these apparent contradictions appear, but once concede the principle that in death and sacrifice alone can development be perfected, and the principle of reconciliation is in our hand.

Now this is exactly the supposition which Jesus Christ tacitly adopts as true; this is the supposition to which the facts of his life give expression. He in whom the purest, highest, and noblest moralism found its manifestation utters no complaint against life's order. He in whom conscience reached its highest order accepted the Cross as the symbol of life, as the true way of humanity's advance; only in sacrifice could the highest moral perfection be attained; only through the Cross could the moral be translated into the spiritual, that is, only in this way could moral impulses become real, personal, spontaneous, part, that is, of man's spiritual nature. Thus in Christ a great universal law finds expression. Perfection, that is, the achievement of the true end of our being, can be only through suffering. True freedom is attained for those who have learned the law of the Cross; they have

learned the secret of service who have learned Christ's secret of self-sacrifice. They stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free; they are free, but they are as servants of God, of Christ, of the world. Only in this law do we become reconciled to life. So Goethe wrote: —

“Till this truth thou knowest,
Die to live again;
Stranger-like thou goest
In a world of pain.”

Once this law is known, we are no longer strangers in life; we live according to the law of our being when we live according to this law of Christ. In this Christ is the supreme law of the soul.

It was a true instinct of the Church which made the Cross the symbol of the Christian faith. It is not Christ incarnate which expresses the supreme law of man's life and the world's progress; it is, as the apostle said, Christ crucified. It was a true instinct which led the apostle to see in the Cross the central thought, yes, the glory, of the Christian life. The Cross was no after-thought, as some short-sighted divines have taught; it was the symbol of the law by which God made

the world; it belonged to the original order of things. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. Suffering existed that the works of God should be made manifest in the sufferer (John ix. 3). Countless souls since Christ lived and died have realized this principle, and hence found their joy in the Cross. In this inspiration they have found the way of progress, the way of true self-realization. We look back over the page of history; we mark glorious achievements and the advancing tide of civilization, and we know that the law of the Cross has been the inspiration of the noblest achievements and the condition of the truest progress. We look back from the vantage-ground of victorious civilization to the lonely figure of Christ upon Calvary, and then we begin to understand. The song bursts forth from saintly and triumphant lips, "Thou hast loved us, and loosed us from our sins, and made us kings and priests unto God." We realize how true it is that these victorious souls found the fulfilment of their life in Christ, and overcame by the blood of the Lamb.

V

CHRIST VERIFIED IN EXPERIENCE

No thoughtful man will be satisfied with a merely external religion; for true religion claims the soul, and in our best moments we realize that it ought to be an inward and impelling force, dominating and unifying our powers and making us active in good. Religion, in fact, is nothing if it is not everything, and it is everything when it is a spirit, which living within influences the whole life of man. It must spread, in fact, from the centre to the circumference of life. Thousands of Utopian schemes for man's regeneration have ended in disappointment because this principle has been forgotten. As Mrs. Browning said:—

“Your Fouriers failed,
Because not poets enough to understand
That life develops from within.”

Hitherto in these lectures we have been mainly occupied with external aspects of religion. We have dealt with the outward tokens of Christ's influence. We considered

Christ as a power outside the soul when we viewed Him as a historical fact, or as providing an ethical standard of life and conduct, or as the sovereign type of spiritual consciousness. Last time, however, we dwelt upon a principle which led inwards, for we spoke of Christ as expressing a constant law of the soul. In stating this we open the way to the thought of the inwardness of true religion. We move from the consideration of the external influences which make for religion to the operation of the powers in spiritual consciousness which create religious experience. We turn from the Christ without to the Christ within.

First we notice that the fact of an inward Christ was recognized early in Christian history. The movement of Christian thought in this direction meets us, as you know, in the New Testament. The historical facts of Christ's life are earnestly insisted on by New Testament writers, as for example by St. Paul and St. John (1 Cor. xv. 1-8; 1 John i. 1-4); but the spiritual experience or the operation of a force within soon begins to occupy the predominant place in their thoughts. Interested as these writers are in facts, they

are even more interested in the religious purpose or aim, or the spiritual significance of the facts. We notice that the central ideas of their letters are spiritual. The facts of Christ's life are spiritually interpreted. The fact of the resurrection is not enough for St. Paul. To him it widens out as a great symbol of spiritual force. He feels that the force expressed and the wide effects indicated need phases of experience and days of conflict to understand. He yearns to apprehend that for which he was apprehended of Christ Jesus; he longs to know Him and the power of his resurrection; for this he is ready to go the way of the Cross, being made conformable to his death and partaker of his sufferings. It is the religion of inwardness which chiefly meets us in these New Testament writers. The witness of external facts is something, but the witness within is even more. St. John, who so strongly affirms the experience he had had of the outward, and insists on what he had seen and touched and handled of the word of life, yet tells his hearers that the inward is enough assurance for them. "Ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things, . . . and ye need not

that any one teach you" (1 John ii. 20, 27). He writes as your own poet Bayard Taylor :

"All outward vision yields to that within
Whereof nor creed nor canon holds the key."

Similarly, the writer of the letter to the Hebrews consoles his hearers for the passing away of the things outward by directing their thoughts to the spiritual conditions or principles which are independent of the changes in time. The external organizations, the carnal commandments, pass away ; the sacrifices which were material end, but in their place comes that which abides, — the surrendered will, by which in Christ we are sanctified, and the power of an endless life. In St. Paul's Epistles this inwardness of religion is his constant theme. The outward man may perish, but the inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor. iv. 16). His desire for the Galatians is that Christ may be formed in them (Gal. iv. 19). His own life is a life in which he no longer lives, but Christ lives in him (Gal. ii. 20) ; and this inward Christ is the normal condition of the Christian life. "Know ye not," he exclaims to the Corinthian Christians, "know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you ? unless indeed ye be repro-

bate" (2 Cor. xiii. 5). I need not enlarge upon this aspect of Christian life so familiar to readers of the New Testament.

It is perhaps, however, well to remember that this emphasis of the spiritual significance of Christ's life and the inwardness of true religion is no revolution of thought, no desperate expedient to find a visionary apology for a defeated cause. Christ's life, from the material point of view and in worldly eyes, might be accounted a failure; but the importance of the inwardness of religion and the predominance of the spiritual over the material were no after-thought, invented to explain away a defeat: for they held a place in Christ's thoughts and teaching. The apostles, in urging the spiritual aspect of religion, were writing in harmony with Christ's own teaching. "The kingdom of heaven is within," such was Christ's own word. His presence would be with his people, even after his earthly work was done. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end." And in answer to the question, "What is come to pass that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" He gave the ethical and mystical answer, "If a man love me, he will keep my

word: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John xiv. 22, 23). He was a fact in the lives of his disciples, but He was to be a power also. He had been with them; He would be with them and in them. He had lived with them; He would live in them. "Because I live, ye shall live also." The thought of Christ as an indwelling Christ — as a power as well as a fact — is not a new departure in teaching. It is in harmony with what Christ himself had indicated.

This spiritual aspect of Christianity, as an inward life and experience, has continued ever since. It has always had its representatives in Christendom. The view that the facts of Christ's life stood for the expression of a religious experience was declared by Origen to be almost a commonplace of Christian teaching. Thus, after repelling the statement of Celsus that Christianity was a secret system, and referring to the clearly published teachings of the faith, the birth, death, and resurrection of our Lord, he uses words which show that for the awakened spirit these facts point to a deep law of life, for he asks who is ignorant of them. "And yet the mystery of the resurrec-

tion, not being understood, is made a subject of ridicule among unbelievers.”

What was thus early expressed has found a place, as we said last time, in the accepted phraseology of Christian devotion; but it is among the writers of the Alexandrian School, among the mystics, and among the advocates of experimental religion that this truth of the inwardness of religion has found consistent witness. From Clement and Origen to Augustine, — from Augustine to Tauler, Eckart, and the dear friends of God in the Oberland, — from these to Molinos and Fénelon and Madame Guyon, and onwards again to William Law, Philip Doddridge, and William Wilberforce, and even in our own day to Father John, — the succession of those who have held religion to be a deep, inward spiritual experience has never been broken.

But this school has encountered bitter and continuous hostility. Against it there have been arrayed philosophers, men of science, and ecclesiastical powers. The philosophers have viewed these mystic thinkers, the advocates of inward religion, as visionaries. Men of science have held aloof from them as from those who asserted as facts things which were unverified

imaginations. Ecclesiastical authorities have at one time looked coldly upon, at other times have violently opposed, a religious theory which seemed to make little of organization, and by its strong spiritual individualism to undermine the *raison d'être* of the Church. Political complications and the spirit of organized jealousy and intrigue, fostered by certain religious orders, found reasons for oppressing and persecuting the devout souls of the mystic school. Tauler — that bright and heroic saint of God canonized not by ecclesiastical authority but by thousands of grateful souls — suffered excommunication; Fénelon was silenced; Madame Guyon harassed and ostracized; and Molinos perished in the prison where he had spent the last eight or nine years of his life. The champions of the inwardness of religion have had hard measure dealt out to them by those who sat in the seat of authority.

We may regret this fact, but we must allow that the mystical school was not wholly free from blame. Those who dwell upon subjective aspects of religion, and separate themselves from the happily correcting influence of things without, are liable to fall into extravagance. They take themselves often too seriously; they

claim divine sanction for mere human imaginings; they fall into egotism; they insensibly adopt a pantheistic creed. It is only natural, under the circumstances, that these tendencies should be the accompaniments of a movement which dwelt too exclusively upon inward experience, and forgot the important check to extravagant notions which God has furnished in outward things.

But nevertheless, this great protesting line of leaders and spiritual guides who stood for the inwardness of religion did good service to Christianity. They sustained the thought of its higher and more spiritual aspects. They did this, as it appears to me, in three ways. They witnessed that religion was personal and not vicarious. Human nature in its weaker aspects has often shown a wish for a vicarious religion. Man in moments of moral indolence greatly covets the help which will relieve him of personal responsibility and personal anxiety. The bold and perilous readiness of ecclesiastical officialism to win unlawful power by intruding between the soul and its God has wrought untold evil, and has proved its futility by the reactions which it has produced. Religion is personal, and any teaching which

ignores or weakens the sense of this personal quality in religion works against the elevation alike of religion and of character. The mystic has witnessed for this personal aspect of religion against the demoralizing theory of religion by delegation.

In the next place, the witnesses on behalf of the inwardness of religion have been champions of the spirit of religion against the slavery of the letter. If religion is of the soul, and its influence is to be sought in developing the moral aptitudes of the soul and winning it into spiritual harmony with the divine order, then the mere outward letter, in which a religion of will and precept delights, is insignificant compared with the claims of living spiritual principles working from within. If God is love and love is of God, the cardinal principle of religion is the possession of a godlike love which controls the whole life of conduct and of action. Remembering how much easier a religion of the letter, which lays stress upon minute rules and numberless precepts, is than a religion which asks for loyalty of spirit, and remembering how much more superficial is the religion of literalism than the religion of the spirit, we may recognize the

services which these men who constantly witnessed for the inwardness and spirituality of religion rendered to Christianity.

Following from this, we may acknowledge the third service which this mysticism has conferred upon us: it has maintained the flexibility of religion against the hard, unbending rigidity of a religion of theory. No doubt there are some essential principles which lie at the base of true religion; it is idle to suppose that religion can discard doctrine, but on the other hand we also know how readily orthodoxy passes as religion, and how easily a rigid dogmatism may claim to be an all-sufficient safeguard of the soul; nevertheless, we know how a true and warm loyalty of faith in Christ has been found allied with very widely divergent denominational beliefs. Simple piety of soul, loving attachment and devoted self-sacrifice in loving service for Christ's sake, is the monopoly of no one church in Christendom. The spirit of God is not bound. Religion from one point of view is as firm as the everlasting hills; from another point of view it is as pliant and flexible as water, which flows freely into every place and fills every vessel, no matter what its form may be. For this flexibility

of the religious spirit, for the universal beneficence of the heavenly streams of divine love, the mystics of Christendom have witnessed. In doing so they have called attention to the enduring quality of the faith of Christ, which, like grass, grows not merely in the well-kept lawn, but which delights to cover up tenderly the seamed sides of wounded and forlorn places.

Thus the inwardness of religion was dwelt upon by Apostles, has been witnessed to by a succession of devout and spiritually minded men, and, in spite of many extravagances and much wayward teaching, has nevertheless bestowed great services upon Christendom. It has been disliked and distrusted, but it has witnessed for aspects of the faith which could ill have been spared, and for principles which have contributed to maintain the reality of religion.

And now at length this religion of personal experience, after centuries of philosophic disdain, is receiving recognition in the minds of thoughtful men. Philosophers and men of science, psychologists as well as students of theology, recognize the facts of religious consciousness, and realize the interest which

attaches to the study of the phenomena disclosed in the experiences of the soul.

Time would fail me if I were to enter with any fulness of treatment into the literature of this subject, but I cannot pass it without reminding you of the valuable contributions to it which all students owe to your Professor James. In his "Varieties of Religious Experience" he has brought together a vast quantity of material, and has illuminated these treasures with vigorous and suggestive comments. Another writer of your country has subjected the phenomena of spiritual expressions to very careful scientific classification. Mr. Granger of my country has examined with cautious skill and judicious discrimination the records of those experiences which are so often the portion of the soul of a Christian. And subjective religion, as it has been called, has been investigated and its place in religious history vindicated by Dr. Edward Caird in his "Evolution of Religion." These, to mention only a few works, are enough to show us that this long-ignored religion of experience has passed out of the cold shadow of neglect, and is being recognized as affording a field of profoundly interesting inquiry.

This is reasonable, because it is only in hearing what man's religious consciousness says of itself that we can explore the depths of the religious nature of man. In investigations of science and philosophy man has been often overlooked, and one rejoices to find that now at length the claim of man to be considered a factor in the matter is admitted. Without admitting man as an element in the case, I do not see how the study of ethic or religion can be fitly carried on ; for man is the field, and may we not say the only field, of ethical and religious study? Men have spoken of the universe as having no moral significance ; and indeed, if we are speaking of material and physical things alone, I scarcely see where moral significance can disclose itself. I do not look for morality in a mountain, any more than I do in a steam-engine. I do not seek any evidence of religion in the anatomy of a man or of a flower. It is in man's higher nature that I find the witness of the real ethic of the world, and it is in this also that I find the witness of religion ; and man himself is a fact, a real and an influential fact in the world : he has altered earth's configuration, he has modified its climate, he has increased its fertility. When the history of the

globe comes to be written, it will be unintelligible without the record of what man has done in making it what it is ; and about one who is thus a real and powerful factor in the evolutionary history of the world every inquiry is full of interest and is likely to be fertile in suggestion. Knowing what man has done, it is profoundly interesting to inquire into what he is, and every hint which he gives of moral power and religious capacity needs to be treasured and studied by those who, having seen how much he has been able to achieve, feel a real and not an unworthy curiosity concerning his destiny. In other words, we have in the moral and religious history of man, in the record of his development in ethical and religious self-consciousness, a wide and varied continent of inquiry ; and in this great continent the investigation into the religious experience of souls forms one of the richest and most deeply interesting fields.

The question which presents itself next is naturally this, namely, whether the witness of experimental religion points in any specific direction. Is any law or order discernible in the process of religious experience? Let us

hear what witness on this matter comes to us from recent and impartial investigators.

Professor Starbuck, in his interesting and careful treatise, "The Psychology of Religion," examined into several hundred cases of religious experience dealing with what is called conversion, which "seems to show in a condensed form some of the essential features of religious development" (p. 11). In the method adopted by Professor Starbuck, "care was always taken to call out the actual facts of experience, and not opinions about certain ideas or doctrines." The records received were carefully studied; the results were classified. The principles shown in the massed results were then interpreted in their larger bearing. The object throughout was not "to classify and define the phenomena of religion, but to see into the laws and processes at work in the spiritual life" (p. 16). Seeking these laws, Professor Starbuck reaches a general view of the story of the inward spiritual crisis, usually described as conversion. There are two types, — one in which the sense of incompleteness is the dominant emotion, the other in which the emotion is due to a sense of sin, — but both types have so much in common that they

may be discussed together. "Both involve the breaking up of old habits (an imperfect, undeveloped life has its set modes of activity which must give way to those which the new insight entails—in this sense all 'have sinned'). Both involve a revelation of new truth; both are attended by a conflict between an accepted course of action and a truer one which is dawning" (p. 159). To illustrate this time of crisis, he gives us diagrams. These diagrams consist of three circles, from the centre of which radiate lines horizontal and lines perpendicular; the horizontal lines indicate the old habits, tastes, and ideas; the perpendicular lines, which run upward, represent the dawning powers of the better life. In the first diagram, the horizontal lines are heavy and strong, the upward lines are faintly marked; this represents the stage of conviction. In the second diagram, which represents the crisis, the strength of the two sets of lines is evenly or nearly evenly balanced. In the third diagram, the victory of the new life is indicated by the strength of the upward lines and the faint character of the horizontal ones. The new life has triumphed: old things are passed away. The selfish tendencies have given way

to the influence of a better and nobler standard of life. The change is a process of unselfing. "The essential thing in it is the identification of the self with the new world of persons and spiritual relations into which it is born. At its best it is the individual will coming into harmony with what it feels to be the Divine Will" (p. 162).

It is clear from these passages that the life of religious consciousness moves at this crisis from the perception of a self-centred life to the acceptance of a life whose centre is outside of self.

Let us now turn to another investigator of these phenomena of religious experience, — to Professor William James of Harvard. He declares that creeds and faith-states, treated as purely subjective phenomena, must be treated as amongst the most important biological phenomena. He asks in his closing pages two questions. "First, is there under all the discrepancies of the creeds a common nucleus to which they bear testimony unanimously? And second, ought we to consider the testimony true?"

He answers the first question in the affirmative.

“The warring gods and formulas of the various religions do indeed cancel each other, but there is a certain uniform deliverance in which religions all appear to meet. It consists of two parts :—

“1. An uneasiness ; and

“2. Its solution.

“1. The uneasiness, reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense that there is something wrong about us as we naturally stand.

“2. The solution is a sense that we are saved from the wrongness by making proper connection with the higher powers.”

He formulates the essence of these religious experiences thus : “The individual, so far as he suffers from his wrongness and criticises it, is to that extent consciously beyond it, and in at least possible touch with something higher, if anything higher exists. Along with the wrong part there is thus a better part of him, even though it may be but a most helpless germ. With which part he should identify his real being is by no means obvious at this stage ; but when stage 2 (the stage of solution or salvation) arrives, the man identifies his real being with the germinal higher part of himself ; and does so in the following way.

He becomes conscious that this higher part is conterminous and continuous with a MORE of the same quality ; which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with, and in a fashion get on board of and save himself when all his lower being has gone to pieces in the wreck.”¹

Here again we meet with the same characteristic features, namely, that the change or experience in religious consciousness is from a life which is self-centred, or centred in some lower aim, to a life which has escaped from the lower to the higher, from the self-centre to some better centre outside of or above self.

This is emphasized by an explanatory note, and by a quotation from Récéjac’s “*Essai sur les fondements de la conscience mystique*,” added by Professor James on page 509. Here is the explanatory note: “The practical difficulties are: 1, to ‘realize the reality’ of one’s higher part; 2, to identify one’s self with it exclusively; and 3, to identify it with all the rest of ideal being.” The quotation from Récéjac is as follows: “When mystical

¹ William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Lecture XX, p. 508. London and New York, 1903.

activity is at its height, we find consciousness possessed by the sense of a being at once *excessive* and *identical* with the self: great enough to be God; interior enough to be *me*. The 'objectivity' of it ought in that case to be called *excessivity*, rather, or exceedingness."

The great inward experience is characterized, therefore, by the sense of "a divided self" and of struggle, "the change of personal centre and the surrender of the lower self," "the appearance of exteriority of the helping power" and "our sense of union with it."

We may now interrogate Professor Granger, who in his book, "The Soul of a Christian," has carefully weighed the evidence of those inner spiritual phenomena. Sometimes the soul seems to be searching for consistency of idea. There is an intellectual unrest which must be satisfied. Conversion also may take the shape of a clarification of feeling. Sometimes both are conjoined; but it is harmony with an ideal which is sought. "Faith can be regarded in a threefold aspect, — as an affection, a belief, a motive. Faith is nothing unless it lives: unless it springs from the depths, and controls the exterior conduct

of the soul. . . . But it does more than this ; it moves beyond itself to an object which it affirms" (pp. 89-95). According to the same writer, "The soul moves to its destination through a series of surprises. 'On this path man neither comes nor goes by footsteps nor intervals of space.' Distances are rather to be measured by change of feeling, nay, more than a change, by what is like a new creation. It is a kind of birth to reach further or rise higher towards the centre of things" (Ibid. pp. 28, 29).

It will be apparent that there is a general harmony of opinion in these writers. The phenomena of the experiences of the soul may present infinite variety of details: the circumstances, the special stimuli, the class of emotions appealed to, may differ, but there is a clear resemblance in broad effect. The change can always be described as the escape from the lower to the higher through some forsaking of self. There is uneasiness, conflict, and the final triumph of the better thing or the truer self.

Now we have to compare this general result with that law of the soul of which I spoke in the last lecture. That law of the soul had

its symbol in the Cross ; its significance was this, that man found his true self only by the sacrifice of the lower self ; that full and final self-expression was possible only through self-surrender. This law, we saw, was set forth in the facts of Christ's life. The advent of the Christ to the world gave rise to conflict ; the struggle between Him and those whose ideal was a worldly one was inevitable from the first ; the struggle ended in an apparent victory of the lower, but in a real victory for the Christ-ideal. The Christ who died rose again. The way to power was found through death. The parallel between the facts of Christ's life and the inward experiences we have been considering is complete. The law of Christ's Cross is the law of the soul ; the law of the soul is the Cross. Only in a conflict in which the old self is slain can the true self find victory. From this springs that happy sense of harmony which brings a deep and abiding joy. The soul enters into communion with God.

Here we need to ask whether this experience is one which is confined to Christendom.

In the view of Ritschl, this happy intercourse of the soul with God is impossible apart from the knowledge of the revelation

given us in the life and death of Jesus Christ. If this really represents Ritschl's view, I confess that I cannot subscribe to it. To deny the possibility of communion of the soul with God apart from Christianity seems to me to forget the witness of the Old Testament, and the testimony of souls naturally Christian. Does it not also forget the claim made by some of the best Christian teachers of early days concerning the working of the Divine Logos in the world before the revelation of Jesus Christ? For myself I like to think of those many pilgrims who in all ages have been seeking their way to Zion with their faces thitherward, of the multitudes whose souls have been athirst for the living God, and I cannot think that these travelling and aspiring souls have been wholly excluded from communion with Him whom they sought and for whom they yearned.

But while we may believe that no earnest and single-minded heart anywhere has been wholly excluded from the joy of communion with the God of their life, it seems to me that it is in the tents of the spiritual Israel that this spiritual intercourse has been widest, fullest, richest, deepest, most frequent. It

is, I think, a fact, capable of very simple and ready historical verification, that under the auspices of Christianity, and under those auspices alone, communion with God has been raised to the level of a familiar religious experience. No religious literature takes such frequent notice of it or gives such vivid expression to it as does the devotional literature of Christendom. The Psalms, indeed, give expression to the thirst for and the joy of communion with God; but the hymns of the Christian Church have not only made the aspirations of psalmists familiar to us, but they have added an enormous treasury of devotion, instinct with the spirit which has found the harmony of its life in God.

There is, then, to be found everywhere witness to the reality of inward religion, and there is to be met with in Christendom a current language of devotion which attests a joyous harmony of spirit reached through Christ. Christ is more than a historical figure and a powerful moral influence. In the view of spiritual experience He is the law and the life of the soul.

The experience of the inward Christ may vary. To some it has come as a sudden reve-

lation, to others as slow brightening dawn. To some the sense of effort against old habits has been the prominent feeling; to others the chief emotion has been that of a joyous self-surrender to one whose love has been all-sufficing. There are many gates to the heavenly Jerusalem, and they face to all points of the compass. But all gates resemble one another; there is a common feature of religious experience. Each gate is one pearl. In all experiences, though the phrasing may differ, the victory which follows the crisis is the victory of self seen in Christ over the old self; the life lived is like that of the apostle,—“I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. ii. 20). The triumph of the Christ within over the impulses and passions of the lower self is no vision, but a fact, to which the language and the experience of countless souls in the nineteen hundred years of Christian history bear abundant witness. Elsewhere, under other skies and associated with other faiths, sparkles of this light have been seen; but the central splendour of this inward light has been manifested in Christendom alone.

This fact, so completely in harmony with the law of human progress, so recurrent in

Christian history, is not without its helpful lessons. It impresses on us a lesson of breadth, of depth, and of fulness of vision.

It gives us a lesson of breadth. This experience of the soul — the witness of the inward Christ and the soul-redeeming significance of the Cross — is confined to no single church or denomination. There are those who seek to build high the barriers which divide denomination from denomination, but where the music of the heart of faith is heard, the dividing walls fall down flat. Though discordant voices speak when controversy is afoot, the voice of the emancipated soul, in whatever fold it is found, is the same. In the region of spiritual experience, there is more agreement than division. In drawing near to Christ men draw nearer to one another. Calvinist and Arminian, Roman Catholic and Protestant, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, speak with one voice when they speak of Christ and his Cross. The Calvinist sings : —

“Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.”

The Arminian sings : —

“Jesu ! lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly.”

The fierce Mediævalist cries : —

■ Jesu ! the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast."

While the leader of the Reformation declares :

■ Lo ! at His cross I view the day
When heaven and earth shall pass away,
And thus prepare to meet Him."

The Presbyterian hears the voice of Jesus say :

" Come unto me and rest."

And the Episcopalian sings :

" Lord, as to thy dear Cross we flee
And plead to be forgiven,
So let Thy life our pattern be
And form our souls for heaven."

There is a deep harmony below all denominational differences ; or, to put the same thought in another form, when we rise high enough, the differences which divide us seem small. When we reach heavenly altitudes, the many voices of earth blend into unexpected harmonies. Many are the voices of earth ; in the heavens there is but one. The realization of the significance of inward spiritual religion widens our thoughts as the love of Christ is wide.

There is a lesson of depth. The religion within is a religion which demands the whole

soul. The claim of God goes deep. The soul that is awake to the significance of eternal things knows that it is worth any price to live its life in God. It counts all things loss to win the Christ-life. This is that pearl for which a man knows that it is worth selling all that he has, if he can but win it.

Lastly, there is a lesson of the fulness of vision which comes to the soul that has learned the possession of the inward Christ. To such an one there is a constant revelation. He who carries Christ within finds Christ everywhere. He needs not to search the empty tomb, or to yearn for the privileged days when Christ walked on the Lake of Galilee or fed the multitudes on the mountain-side; for he in whose heart Christ dwells by faith finds Christ in worship where two or three are gathered together, and not in worship only, but in every simple duty of life, and in the needs and sorrows of every suffering soul among the sons of men.

VI

CHRIST AS AUTHORITY

IN my opening lecture I gave the reasons which led me to the subject which has occupied our thoughts. I explained that I was led to it by the terms of the trust, by the remembrance of the two names which are jointly associated with the lectureship, and by a profound conviction that the great need of our times is the thought and spirit of Christ himself. To-night, as we meet for the last time, one question seems to me to press for an answer. We have considered Christ as a fact in history, as a great moral and spiritual influence in the world, as the conscience of mankind, and the law of the soul's progress, but we may ask whether in all this we have any approach to certitude? Is there solid ground enough beneath our feet on which to build the foundations of life and conduct? Can we come near to what the apostle would call the full assurance of faith?

Before I deal with this question, let me

remark that the wish for certitude may be a very noble or a very cowardly wish. It may be noble; indeed, it is noble, if it spring from the passionate desire for truth, if it be the expression of that courageous emulation of spirit which will not be satisfied with any vision less than that of the truth itself. But the wish for certitude is often an unworthy one; it may spring, not from the imperious love of truth, but from the ignoble desire for ease, or from the cowardly wish to escape responsibility, and so to shirk one of God's current ways of discipline. I need not remind you that the unhealthy craving for authority, which in some times and places has been so frequent, is a symptom of this slothful disposition and this discreditable timidity. Such a wish can never be finally satisfied under present conditions; it is difficult to believe that any mind could expect, as things are, to reach a state in which no question could arise without finding a reply, no doubt enter the soul without being promptly dissolved, in which there would be no room for misgiving, no possibility of meeting any perplexing problem; for placed as we are, we are surrounded by mystery, whether we look

without us or within. We only know in part, and certitude, therefore, in any absolute or complete sense must be looked for only when we reach that realm where we shall know even as also we are known.

With this caution, then, against false expectations of certitude, and still more against the spirit which may prompt us to an otiose dislike of responsibility, we may return to the question whether we have in Christ a firm foothold on which we can stand and encounter the tests and discipline of life.

Happily for us, there were men in our Lord's day who, like many among ourselves, demanded certitude. There were those who asked, "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly." We may therefore, in turning to the story of Christ's life, ascertain how He himself dealt with this question of assurance and authority.

We ask, then, what indications are there of Christ's mind on this matter? And first we notice that He refuses any unlawful ascendancy over men's minds and wills. The story of the temptation, I think, makes this plain. It is not relevant to our purpose to settle the special sense in which we understand

this story ; it is of no importance, as far as our question is concerned, whether we read the story in a distinctly objective or a comparatively subjective sense. The principle we seek is equally clear in either case. Christ is represented as refusing to avail himself of any means which are likely to give Him an adventitious or unlawful ascendancy over his fellow men. He will not go to them robed in the dazzling splendours of royalty, for He will not owe anything to the fascinations of pomp and circumstance ; neither will He go to them to startle them with any superhuman wonder ; He will not owe influence to kingly rank, nor will He descend from the pinnacle to the pavement of the Temple ; He will not owe influence either to the self-interest or the superstitions of men. In complete harmony with this resolve is Christ's spirit in his teaching. He rebukes those who desire to find authority in signs ; it is a token of a demoralized state of mind. " An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Christ repudiates any approach to unlawful ascendancy.

But does He indicate the nature of lawful ascendancy ? Does He suggest the conditions of lawful authority ? I think He does. We have

the crucial and critical occasion when He was challenged respecting his own authority. "By what authority doest thou these things, or who is he that gave thee this authority?" Such is the question. How does He deal with it? He deals with it by referring his questioners back to a fact in their own knowledge and experience; He refers them to John the Baptist. What was the state of things then? How did they interpret that remarkable man and his mission? What authority did they see in John's baptism? We know what the essential point of John's baptism was; it was a baptism of repentance. John stood for righteousness in life and conduct; he protested against fraud, violence, and oppression; he baptized, and his baptism was a symbol of resolution against the ways of unrighteousness and wrong. The matter was within the recollection and experience of Christ's hearers. He asks them whether they saw heaven's authority or only an earthly authority in John's baptism. They were perplexed, not because they did not know, but because they were reluctant to say. They dared not deny the heavenly authority of John's baptism, for the whole conscience of the populace had recog-

nized it; they dared not, however, acknowledge this, for they knew that Christ's reply would be, "If you recognized heavenly authority in him, why did you not believe him?" We need not pursue the incident farther; the principle which Christ brings into view is quite plain. His hearers were able to recognize heavenly authority when they saw it. What need was there for Him to assert his authority? These men who questioned Him had practically acknowledged, though afraid to put it into words, that a heavenly authority had been in their midst, and that however much they may have kept cowardly silence, they knew it, and had recognized John as a messenger from heaven. If in the message of the Baptist they had heard heaven's voice, what need was there for them to question the authority of Christ? They had allowed that when righteousness came, it could be recognized. The one who not only taught righteousness, but also was the righteous one, was in their midst. To ask for his authority was only to dally with their own convictions; heaven, which spoke through the Baptist's lips, was speaking in the lips and life of Christ. The moral witness of heaven's au-

thority was clear. It was needless to tell to men who had not the courage of their convictions the meaning of the thing which in their souls they knew. Thus, on this occasion which we may call a test occasion, Christ made clear that heaven's authority came with moral force, and demanded a moral response.

We find the same principle in a parable, which, if I mistake not, has a close bearing upon this question. I speak of the double parable of the door of the sheepfold and the good shepherd (John x. 1-6). In this passage Christ speaks of himself both as the shepherd and as the door through which the shepherd enters. The sheep recognize the shepherd because he enters by the door; his authority is accepted because he so enters. "The sheep hear his voice." Those who came before Him may have claimed authority, but Christ brought his authority with Him. He was his own authority: the moral force, the constant right, the daily and complete manifestations of goodness, were the expressions of qualities which were recognizable by all whom worldliness or self-interested conventionalism had not blinded to the moral values of things. When character disclosed itself in righteous-

ness, in kindly, pure, and noble deeds, confidence was felt: conscience responded: authority was recognized and understood.

What, then, do these teachings of Christ amount to? Can we derive from them Christ's view of authority? I think we can. In both these instances we may see that what Christ calls attention to is a fact without and a judgment within. John the Baptist was a fact without: he appeared; he preached; he baptized; he called to the consciences of men; he was a fact without, calling to a moral judgment within. The strong external presentation of the claims of righteousness provoked the great and striking moral response when all Judæa and Jerusalem went out to Him, confessing their sins. It was not conscience alone without the preacher, it was not the preacher without the conscience in man: it was the contact between the fact without and the capacity of moral judgment within which completed the conviction of authority. This was the principle upon which Christ rested; He, like John, came expressing in word and deed the principles of a moral and spiritual order; He appealed to the moral capacity of men. "Why even of yourselves judge ye

not what is right?" It was only when the worldly and self-interested spirit had coerced into silence the voice of the moral nature that response became impossible. "How can ye believe, which receive glory one of another, and the glory that cometh from the only God ye seek not?"

We are now, perhaps, in a position to ask what light this teaching of Christ throws upon the question of authority.

There have been many attempts to fix authority in some single quarter. Some have insisted that it is to be found in the Church; some have declared that it is in the Bible; some have said that it is in the conscience alone. I need not dwell upon the general ambiguity of these statements. Authority is in itself, I admit, an ambiguous word, and there is a sense in which it can rightly and fitly be attributed to Church, Bible, and conscience. There are questions of order and discipline in which any church, like any organized society, has authority; there are questions of doctrine and interpretation of doctrine in which the Bible must be allowed authority; and there are questions of personal action and personal

duty in which all will admit the authority of conscience. But in the larger sense of the authority which brings certitude or assurance to the soul, Church, Bible, and conscience are separately inadequate for this task. Some years ago, Sir George Stokes, a great man, possessed of great modesty, great simplicity of character, and genuine devotion, pointed out that each of these, Church, Bible, and conscience, was but as a single thread, and that a single thread might prove too weak to carry the burden attached to it; but he suggested that perhaps the weight which a single thread could not carry might be supported by the intertwined strength of all the threads. It was a wise and reasonable suggestion. Authority in the sense of which I am speaking is seldom — I had almost said never — single, but dual. It is the coming together of two powers which gives rise to what I may describe as adequate constitutional authority. In our Lord's teaching this seems to me to be recognized. The authority of John was felt in the coincidence of two forces, — the moral teacher without and the moral response within. It was not only the preacher, but the conscience; not only the conscience, but the

preacher: the inward capacity was called into activity by the outward stimulus. If we reflect, we shall, I think, see that authority, to be satisfactory and adequate, needs some such combination of outward and inward powers.

This seems to me to be true in matters of knowledge. The sunlight which falls into my room and brightens the outline of some little memento of bygone days would never awaken knowledge and memory in me, had I not the power of sight. It is not the sunbeam alone which lingers lovingly upon that dear relic of the past; my eyes linger there also, and sight as well as light, and light as well as sight, are needful to evoke those tender memories which fill my eyes with tears. Or take the progress of knowledge, and see how it is due to combined powers that all advance takes place. Facts are needed; knowledge may be said to be built upon facts; facts are then a kind of outside power, but knowledge is due, not to facts alone, but to reflection upon facts. Sir William Turner, speaking to the British Association (1900), dwelt upon the progress of science and the conditions which were requisite for its progress. "In scientific research, diligence and accuracy are funda-

mental qualities. By their application new facts are discovered and tabulated, their order of succession is ascertained, and a wider and more intimate knowledge of the processes of nature is acquired." This is excellent, but the president does not stop here. His knowledge of man warns him that he must not only demand the conditions necessary for the correct collocation of facts: there are qualities of mind which are requisite in order that right conclusions may be arrived at; and so, after having shown us how facts are to be gathered, he proceeds with the caution, "But to decide on their true significance, a well-balanced mind and the exercise of prolonged thought and reflection are needed." Does he require any other faculty for the prosecution of successful scientific study? Yes, he adds another, which I think will commend itself to thoughtful people as eminently reasonable. He has told us that accuracy of observation should be combined with a well-balanced mind, and he adds: "The conjunction influences and determines progress in all the sciences, and when associated with a sufficient touch of imagination, when the power of seeing is conjoined with the faculty of foreseeing, of projecting

the mind into the future, we may expect something more than the discovery of isolated facts ; their coördination and the enunciation of new principles and laws will necessarily follow.”

Practically, we act upon this principle in our education of the young. We present to them something new, — some object, some fact, something external to the mind of the child ; we do so believing that there is in the child a capacity of response. In this way, through the external stimulus provoking the inward response, the child’s knowledge is slowly built up.

The principle plays also a part in the moral education. Here we seek to build up character ; we are not concerned with filling the mind with knowledge ; we wish to develop the moral qualities in such strength and fitting proportion as shall form a noble character. We pursue the same method ; we present the ideas of right ; we seek to awaken admiration of courage, goodness, truthfulness. But the character grows only in proportion as the moral forces become authoritative within the soul. When this is the case, however, the character expresses something which has been formed through the interaction of forces and

ideals calling forth continuous responses from within.

Thus in all these cases authority is dual: the fact or stimulus without is met by the response from within. Our assurance or conviction does not depend either upon inward power alone or upon outward fact alone, but upon the combined working of these two, bringing forth in us something which is not naked fact or potential capacity, but something which is derived from both, and which may be knowledge, or certitude, or conviction, or assurance, but which would be none of these things had not fact without been wedded with capacity within. This is in effect what Emerson said when he declared that "every scripture is to be interpreted by the same spirit which gave it forth;" and again, that "every object rightly seen unlocks a new faculty of the soul." In other words, the conviction of authority is dual. We must now ask, What is the bearing of this principle upon the subjects touched upon in the previous lectures? It is the principle upon which I have been working all through these lectures. Our thoughts were first directed to the Christ without, and later to the Christ within.

The Christ without was Christ as a fact in history, as a fact which in later history was seen to be an influential fact. We saw Him, not simply as one whose life was a fact, but whose character became a moral fact so strong, so sovereign, that it has been accepted as the standard of human life and conduct. As a fact, He has become the conscience of mankind. He was also seen as the sovereign type of true spiritual harmony, the man of men who lived a life of serene and unbroken relationship with the eternal world, and with his Father in heaven.

From this Christ without we turned, in the last lecture, to the Christ within. We dwelt upon the inwardness of religion, and we found the well-attested and frankly recognized witness of inward religion expressed and continuously witnessed in the personal experience of multitudes. In this continuous witness we have not merely indication of the fact and reality of religion as an inward experience, but we have the opportunity of its verification. Whatever may be the value of the authority of the Church, there is an unquestioned force in the splendid *Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus* of Christian religious expe-

rience. The New Testament gives to us the picture of the Christ without ; the religious consciousness of Christendom bears witness to the Christ within ; in the Gospels we have the Christ of history ; in the souls of Christians we have the Christ of experience. We meet thus a convergence of fact and experience. It is not proof, if you will ; it does not banish all questions ; it does not solve all difficulties ; but it is the drawing together of two facts which are enough to evidence the presence of a great religious power in the world, which unite together the greatest fact in human history with an inward spiritual force, a unique fact with a continuous experience.

But here we may be encountered by an objection which, though perhaps not so formidable now as it was in another generation, is yet sufficiently influential to warrant our noticing it. The objection is this : you are trying to base a religion, which from the nature of the case must deal with eternal things, upon a historical fact ; a historical fact affords too slender a basis for such an erection. How can that which is eternal find support in time ?

I need not remind you, as has been already done by a forcible and recent writer, that

the days when this objection was felt to be weighty have passed away. As long as man had no key to human history, and all events and incidents were looked upon as a series of accidents, none of which had any necessary place in the development of the drama, — in fact, when history had no dramatic tendency at all, — an isolated fact lacked life and relationship, and it was difficult to imagine that it could be made the pivot of some vast movement, or the expression of an eternal law. But we read history differently; we no longer go back in imagination to primeval times, when happiness and innocence, allied with vast knowledge and highly organized intelligence, was the lot of our first ancestors; few now will contend, as Bolingbroke did, for the superiority of what was called natural religion; few will imagine the necessity for any Edmund Burke taking up his pen and imitating the inimitable in a vindication of natural society as possessing advantage over the civilization which it has taken centuries to evolve; few will tell us with Bishop South that “an Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise.” We now read history with other eyes; we note the

great advance; we realize the continuous development of human powers and human character, and we can realize in consequence how the whole process may easily be regarded as one complete scheme; it is no longer an incoherent and meaningless interplay of wild and accidental forces; event is linked with event; vast meanings and powers may be lodged in incidents which careless men may pass by unobserved. We can understand something of the significance of history, and we are slow to endorse the belief that there can be no eternal significance in simple things.

And here I may remind you that we can and do discriminate between unimportant incidents and facts and those which we recognize as illuminative. Doubtless, if we knew all, the most insignificant facts would be found to be charged with meaning. But meanwhile we may admit that some facts are insignificant in the large sense. It is a fact that we all had a birthday, but I am not disposed to reckon this as other than an insignificant fact to everybody except ourselves; but there are facts which we recognize at once as illuminative; they shed a light far beyond themselves. The fall of an apple is insignificant, but when

we talk of the apple which fell before Newton's eyes, we realize that we are talking of an illuminative fact, for it speaks to us of an eternal law. The swinging of a lamp is an ordinary affair, but for the man that had eyes to see it, a law of eternal movement was there. Thus in the realm of advancing knowledge there are such things as illuminative facts. It is not different in the realm of national life. A flag may be described as a piece of bunting patched into various colours, and it may have no more significance than a pocket handkerchief ; for as De Girardin said, " Un drapeau qu'on cache dans sa poche, ce n'est pas un drapeau ; c'est un mouchoir." But when the traveller, having crossed stormy oceans, catches sight of that friendly piece of bunting hanging over some fortress that crowns a sandy spit of land, he feels his heart moved ; and a thousand memories crowding into his soul, he salutes the flag with the homage of his tears. The flag is an illuminative fact to him. Twelve and sixpence is not a large sum, and a well-to-do man might pay it away without misgiving or sense of loss ; yet there was a day in English history when twelve and sixpence was too much for an

English gentleman to pay. Would twelve and sixpence, asked Edmund Burke, when he was pleading the cause of your country, — would twelve and sixpence have ruined Mr. Hampden? No; but twelve and sixpence and half twelve and sixpence, paid on the terms on which it was demanded, would have ruined not only John Hampden but the liberties of England. That twelve and sixpence is an illuminative fact. Tea is a refreshing and commonplace commodity; but there was a day in American history when, in the judgment of your ancestors, tea stood for tyranny, and the chests containing it went into Boston Harbour. This also is an illuminative fact.

In the same way, in the religious story of mankind there have been illuminative facts; and when we declare that Christ is a fact of history, we know well that this fact is not a dark or barren one; it is illuminative and fruitful. It was as such that I sought to set it before you; for as we saw, Christ was not only a historical fact, and a great moral fact in human history; He was not only a great spiritual fact in the religious life of man, but He was in himself a great illuminative

fact, seeing He expressed in himself, as we have seen, the law of the human soul.

This law of the human soul, which is thus expressed and embodied in Christ, acts as a harmonizing power in the religious consciousness; it brings together things which often fall asunder or appear to be mutually incompatible. It harmonizes ethics and religion; it harmonizes the volitional and the self-surrendering qualities in the religious experience.

It harmonizes ethics and religion. The test of value to be applied to religion, it has been said, lies in the question how far the ethical quality is indissolubly connected with the religion. We may admit that there is a tendency to divorce ethics from religion. Men are prone to regard religion as a substitute for ethics, and to make the scrupulous performance of what are inaptly described as their religious duties a discharge from the obligation of moral ties. They reason that if matters are made straight with God, nothing else is needed. The prevalence of this spirit is reflected in the widespread distrust of anything approaching to cant. The old story of the grocer who, having carefully inquired of his assistant whether he had sanded the

sugar and dusted the tea, bids him come to prayers, illustrates the temper of soul which keeps up the religious formality while violating the canons of the most simple morality. In its worst form religion becomes the occasion for evading all obvious moral and social obligations. It had become so in Christ's day. Under the plea of what was owed to God the sacred tie of filial duty was broken. One magic word, as we have noted, set aside the bond between the son and his parents. As religion was viewed and taught by Jesus Christ, such a state of things was impossible and incredible. To Him the moral and religious spheres were inseparable. There was one principle, of which both were expressions. That principle was love; love was the tie which bound man to God; love was the tie between man and man. God was the Father, and love was the natural and necessary bond, the one law of the one universal realm of God. As all moral obligation ran back to love as to its matrix principle, so love itself had its fountain-head in God. Henceforth religion and ethics were indissoluble. To Him, therefore, the worship of God offered by one whose heart was not breathing the atmosphere of love was

a vain and a mocking worship. With unhesitating emphasis He condemned it. "If therefore thou art offering a gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother." We need, if we would avoid the snare of self-deception, to repeat to ourselves that earnest *first*, — "first be reconciled to thy brother." When the followers of Christ accumulate splendid gifts in their churches and, forgetful of the claims of their fellow men, indulge in sumptuous and costly forms of worship, may there not be a forgetfulness of the spirit of Him who said, "*First*, thy brother?" In a faith whose essential force is love, there can be no separation between religion and ethics. Both are manifestations of the same spirit, and the religion of Christ being a religion of the spirit, and the spirit being that of love, the painful divorce between religion and ethics becomes an impossibility in genuine Christianity.

A similar line of thought may show us that in Christ the two aspects of religious experience described by the psychologist as the volitional and the self-surrendering re-

spectively are brought into harmony. There is in the experience of the soul a strong urgency towards self-assertion ; the realization of evil within which has to be contended with calls for energy and the output of will power. The ideal before the mind is victory over the foes within ; self-mastery needs to be fought for. But when self-mastery has been in any degree gained, the victory is laid at the feet of the Lord, who called his servants into the battle. The emotion which has led to the wish for self-mastery is not, in a religious sense, the mere desire to master self ; it is the desire for self-mastery because of One who wishes us to be worthy. Even should the victory be won, the soul would yet experience a sense of incompleteness ; the Christian pilgrimage can never end with a victory over self. When Dante gave us the picture of the pilgrimage of the soul, he told us that it consisted of three parts. In the first, the soul learned the lesson of self-revelation. In the *Inferno*, evil was shown to be hideous and hateful : being allowed to work itself out to its final consequences, it was seen as it really was. In the second, the soul learned self-mastery in toiling slowly up the steep ascent and winding

terraces of the mountain of the Purgatorio, at whose summit the pilgrim was crowned with the crown of self-conquest. But standing at the summit of that victorious hill, the pilgrim had not reached the true heaven ; the spot on which he stood was but an earthly paradise. Mere self-conquest was not the true heaven of God, and therefore in the third part of his journey all strain and self-effort ceases ; the pilgrim abandons himself to the influences of the atmosphere which surrounds him ; he toils upward no more ; a power so strong that it is unfelt moves him towards the final and central heaven of God ; so swiftly does he ascend that he hardly knows that he moves ; in this happy and complete self-surrender to heaven's mysterious forces he travels towards the true heart of all things. If love calls for self-mastery, love, when the victory is won, calls for self-surrender.

“ Our wills are ours we know not how,
Our wills are ours to make them thine.”

That is the constant language of the religion of love ; and in it, therefore, the volitional and self-surrendering experiences of religious life are brought into harmony.

Thus in Christ, as a law of the soul, we

possess a fact which is widely illuminative ; it makes clear things that were dark ; it draws things which were sundered into a coöperating harmony. We begin to realize that thought of the writer to the Hebrews that Christ has brought to us not the law of a carnal commandment, but, in being the law of the human soul, the power of an endless life.

Our task is done. We have seen that Christ is a fact in history, that He is an influential fact in the moral development of mankind, that He has won so upon the moral sense of men that He is the accepted ideal, the conscience of humanity, that He exhibits in himself the sovereign type of religious consciousness in its complete and unbroken harmony with the Father in heaven ; we have seen how his life expresses the fundamental law of man's intellectual, moral, and spiritual development, the achievement of the power of true life through the experience of a mystic death ; we have seen how in the true and continuous witness of souls, Christ is not only their law but their life. We have heard the witness of the voice without, which has been heard and acknowledged in human history ;

we have heard the witness of the voice within, which has spoken from the prolonged and constant experience of Christian souls; the voice of the Christ of experience has answered back to the voice of the Christ of history. In other words, the witness of the fact without has been endorsed by the witness of the experience within; the dual principle of authority is seen to have its place here, and we can understand, perhaps, something of the meaning of the assurance of faith of which the apostle spoke. These voices without and within attest ethical and spiritual principles which the universal conscience of mankind has acknowledged to be noble, worthy of reverence, worthy of imitation; for Christ is both the ideal of the world and the joy and rapture of those souls who have known Him as the Christ within. But all this, it may be said, brings no proof, no certitude. No, it brings no certitude if you will. But certitude or no certitude, Christ as we have seen Him is such that, even were there no certainty of heavenly joy and a future of enlarged experience, He would yet be worth taking as the guide and inspiration of our life. No proof! no, if you will, but surely there is enough

moral power in this Christ of fact and of experience to make Him a good working hypothesis of life and conduct, — helpful as a spiritual ideal which, if accepted by all men, would promote the future welfare of the race.

No! there is, if you will, no proof in what we have said; and yet, as I turn my thoughts back upon the story and its wondrous meaning and its spiritual depths, I find some things more difficult to believe than the eternal significance of this story of Christ. I find it difficult to believe that even in things intellectual our fundamental powers and laws of thought will hereafter be found to have wholly misled us, or that we may wake up in a realm where our axioms of thought are wholly untrue, or in which two straight lines may enclose a space and the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle may be unequal. And yet this would not be so inconceivable to me as to awake in a realm in which moral principles cease to operate, and where wrong will be deemed right and right wrong, in which truth and honour and equity are meaningless words. Still less could I conceive a world in which love meant nothing, or in which all that was shown to men in Christ had no counterpart in eternity. I

could perchance understand a region in which gravity and the conservation of energy and the laws of motion fail, but I could not understand a region in which goodness and love have ceased to be, or in which love has dwindled down to any lower place than that of the supreme motive power of the universe. You may call this faith, but it springs from the necessity of the soul; it rests on the conviction that what has been the most glorious and potent force known to us cannot deceive us, or have no place in the reality of things; and this being so, I cannot believe that in the final dissolution of things Love, like Noah's dove, will beat her fruitless wings against the ark of things unshakable and find no kindly hand to draw her in, and give her a home and shelter, in the new and eternal order to which the old is giving place. I feel sure that my heart and my convictions will not mislead me finally, and that when I know and understand things better, I shall find that the great Florentine was right, and that the great and high terraced universe, with its experiences which disciplined and its joys which softened the heart, — yes, and with its doleful glimpse into the hideous depths of evil, — was built up of

the eternal Love, by which the stars and all creation move. Christ taught love, and has been ever since love's picture to men; and I feel sure that there will not be a soul to whom the final revelation comes who will not see that in the evolution of our world there has been one law, one life, one love, and that that law, that life, and that love have been the law, the life, and the love unfolded to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Riverside Press

*Electrotypes and printed by H. O. Houghton & Co.
Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.*

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Carpenter, William Boyd, 1841-1918.
The witness to the influence of Christ

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Carpenter, William Boyd, *bp. of Ripon*, 1841-1918.

The witness to the influence of Christ; being the William Belden Noble lectures for 1904, by the Right Reverend William Boyd Carpenter, D. D., bishop of Ripon. Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and company, 1905.

viii p., 1 l., 180 p., 1 l. 1905.

1. Jesus Christ—Influence. 2. Jesus Christ—Teachings. I. Title.
II. Series: William Belden Noble lectures, 1904.

Library of Congress

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